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The *Magazine for the Christian Home*

Hearthstone

December, 1953 – 25c

The Magazine for the Christian Home

Hearthstone

E. Lee Neal, *Editor*

Ida Parker Bieber, *Assistant Editor*

Contents

ARTICLES

Have We Outgrown Christmas? . . . *Mrs. Clarence H. Hamilton* 2
Christmas Toys for Health and Happiness . *Annie Laurie Von Tungeln* 5
Season's Eatin's *Ida M. Pardue* 7
A Wreath of Christmas Symbols *Maymie R. Krythe* 12
We've Had Fun! *Marion Sue Heron* 18
Advertising—A Christian Potential *T. T. Frankenberg* 21
Working as a Team. (Study Article with Study Guide) *Idris W. and Elizabeth N. Jones* 23
The Church and Marriage *J. D. Montgomery* 28

FICTION

The Angel With Only One Wing *Helen Dunscombe Marble* 10
Children's Story
Starette, the Christmas Snowflake *Evelyn Witter* 14

FEATURES

Make a Snowflake Window *Louise Price Bell* 4
Joseph—*A Poem* *Charles M. McLean* 8
Resources for Worship with Young Children 15
Prayer of a Parent—*On Christmas Day* . . . *Frances Dunlap Heron* 20
Biblegram *Hilda E. Allen* 26
Books for the Hearthside 27
Family Counselor *Dr. George W. Crane* 29
This Is the Way We Did It: Christmas Day. . . *Frances M. Powers* 30

COVER: *"The Holy Family," a painting by Murillo. Photo by Three Lions*

Published Jointly Each Month By

Christian Board of Publication
Wilbur H. Crambler, *President*
Beaumont and Pine Boulevard
Box 179, St. Louis 3, Missouri

The American Baptist Publication Society
Luther Wesley Smith, *Executive Secretary*
1703 Chestnut St., Philadelphia 3, Pa.

Vol. 5 **No. 12**

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Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office at St. Louis, Mo., under Act of March 3, 1879. Additional entry at Philadelphia, Pa.

All books and printed matter referred to in *Hearthstone* may be ordered from either publishing house. All prices are subject to change without notice.

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Price, 25 cents per single copy; five or more copies to one address, 20 cents each (60 cents per quarter); single subscriptions, $3.00 per year.

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Printed in St. Louis, Mo., U. S. A.



At Christmas

There's a song in the air!
There's a star in the sky!
There's a mother's deep prayer
And a Baby's low cry!
And the star rains its fire where the Beautiful sing,
For the manger of Bethlehem cradles a King.

Josiah Holland's "A Christmas Carol" effervesces with Christmas joy. And, though brief, it tells a story—a story which we hope will be at the heart of your family's Christmas celebration.

For Christmas is, more than any other holiday, a family day—or, for the less fortunate, family-remembering day—for all Christians. So much so, that even in the unchristian business of war, "Home for Christmas" has at times been used to spur men on to almost superhuman endeavor.

At Christmas, there is one family that all Christian families call to mind in picture and crèche, song and story—the Holy Family. Usually, it's the manger scene, with shepherds, townsfolk or the Wise Men kneeling in wonderment beside the new-born babe. Somewhat different, but very beautiful, is Murillo's "Holy Family" on our cover. May this happy family scene bring love and joy to your family and others who view it.

At Christmas, especially in this bounteous land of ours, one dark cloud dims the lights, even in Christian homes. It's the abuse of Christmas giving. We have therefore chosen a quite un-Christmas painting for page one, in the hopes that as your family makes its Christmas plans, you will try, as Jesus did, to keep commercialism from defiling all things holy.

● **This issue . . .** It glows as warm as a Christmas candle—so warm that the snowflake in the children's story melts away instead of becoming a jewel in a fairy's wand. One choice gift to our readers is the dramatic poem "Joseph," sent to us by the author's widow and afterward reverently illustrated by his son, a college student. Another family gives us "We've Had Fun," by Frances Dunlap Heron's daughter Sue, with a prayer Mrs. Heron wrote at our request, and right in the midst of preparations for her older son's wedding. Also, an article "Have We Outgrown Christmas?" with a do-less-and-start-sooner theme (and we hope it's not too late to start sooner!).

● **Next month . . .** A new series on the parents and home life of famous people; it begins with Handel. And the first of a series of paintings of the disciples by Rubens. And more . . . *much* more. (See page 31.)

Merry, merry Christmas!

—I.P.B.



A Word from The Word

Camera Clix. *Painting by Carl Bloch.*

Christ Chasing the Moneylenders from the Temple

The Hope of the World

There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.
And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.
And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.
He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide by what his ears hear;
but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked.
Righteousness shall be the girdle of his waist,
and faithfulness the girdle of his loins.

—Isaiah 11:1-5

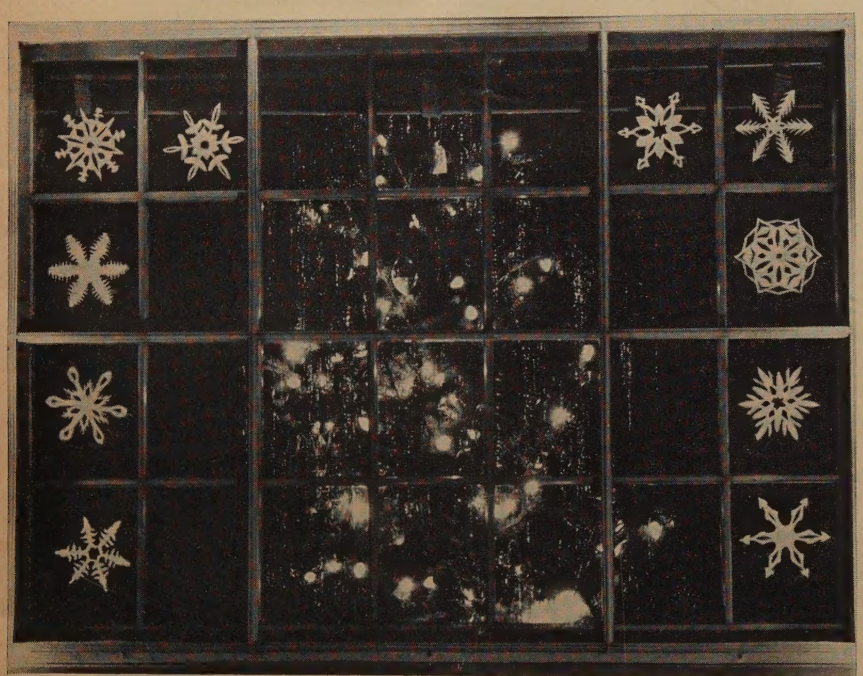
their symbolic worth. They are symbols of our love and good wishes, and so continue to be remembered long after they have disappeared. When Christmas means the giving of ourselves to others, in many and various ways, Christmas can never be outgrown, as long as mankind exists. For our deepest need and our greatest joy is to love and to be loved. Programs, pageants, parties are beside the point unless they give us ways of expressing this deep desire of the heart.

Some gifts are especially fine for this purpose. In one family, each member ties on the tree envelopes addressed to all the others. Inside each one is a promise of what the giver will do for the other. John, nine years old, writes to his father, "I will shovel the snow from now on, all by myself." Twelve-year-old Anne writes to her mother, "I will get breakfast on Sunday mornings, so you can sleep a little longer." John's father writes to John, "I will take you fishing the first day the season opens." Gifts of this sort will carry the meaning of Christmas far into the new year.

There is no time like the month of December for family worship. The pervading mood is one of gratitude and tenderness and responsiveness to God's love. We can use Sunday breakfast times very effectively. For the Sunday after Christmas, we might use the story of the flight into Egypt. How like Joseph and Mary are the parents today who flee from hostile places for the sake of their children! Thinking of Jesus and his parents as homeless and fleeing, makes more vivid present-day homelessness and suffering. Whatever we can do to help these refugees find homes, will keep alive the Christmas spirit in the days of the New Year. For Christmas should not end with Christmas Day, with only the putting the house in order and the paying of bills to follow. It should lead into more lasting attitudes of loving kindness toward all, enhanced and deepened by all succeeding Christmases. Our ways of observing Christmas can truly do this if we try.

Our children may forget many gifts that we give them, but they will never forget the spirit in which we celebrate this happy season. May those memories be centered about a gay, happy mother and a loving, understanding father who shared with them the singing and the stories, the worship and the giving. Such a Christmas will never be outgrown.

★ ★ ★



Make a Snowflake Window

by Louise Price Bell

ALL YOU NEED for a real, wintery-looking window, whether the snow is piled high around your house or not, is some paper doilies and scissors. Cut the patterns you want from the doilies and fasten them to the inside of the window with raw egg-white (which will wash off easily after the holidays are over).

If you happen to have windows broken up into small panes of glass, fasten a king-size snowflake in the center of each pane. If the windows are plain, attach them where they look best, making sure to leave a center portion free so that your lighted Christmas tree will show up well. The snowflakes will give the appearance, from outside, of forming a frame for your gay, cheerful tree.

As you make plans for the Christmas season in your home, you may find helpful suggestions and materials in these booklets:

The Family Celebrates Christmas, by Dorothy Carl. (Pilgrim Press, 1948. 64 pages; 50 cents.) Carols, poems, games, worship centers, decorations, etc.

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Previous December issues of HEARTHSTONE contain Christmas stories, poems, and pictures, as well as numerous articles on how to make Christmas meaningful in the home. —I. P. B.

By Annie Laurie Von Tungeln

It's fun to buy toys, but can you buy toys that are fun? If you're confused, here's advice that may help you

Christmas Toys for Health and Happiness



—Vivienne Lapham from Publix.

As a child grows older and his powers of imagination increase, he develops individual tastes.

A THREE-YEAR-OLD girl of my acquaintance had frequently been urged to drink her milk so that she would grow strong and well. One day, as she took her first sip, she looked about proudly and said, "Watch me grow!" Parents and teachers do feel sometimes that children grow before their very eyes, not only physically, but mentally and socially. And toys, as well as milk, play an important part in this development.

Besides, parents find that it is fun to buy toys. An adult must be very old, indeed, when he ceases to enjoy a toy shop, and even older if he does not derive pleasure from watching a child on his birthday or on Christmas morning as he runs eagerly from one treasure to another, his eyes aglow with pleasure. However, as adults, we should be primarily interested in, not the fun we experience from buying toys, but the fun and motives for creative play which they furnish those who use them. We must not succumb to a toy merely for its beauty nor because we ourselves are so enamored of it as to think it would be fun for the young child to play with.



—Martin Krewson.

We should select toys to suit the individual child.

We should select toys to suit the individual child. Infants, of course, almost uniformly enjoy the same playthings. For example, children one, two, or three years old like kitchen utensils, both for the "feel" of them and for the noise they can produce. As a child grows older and his powers of imagination increase, he begins to develop individual tastes. Although boys and girls have many play tastes in common, in some cases their interests begin to differ even when they are very young.

An amusing incident which occurred in my back yard illustrates this. Bobby, a three-year-old neighbor, was playing with my visitor, Penney, also three, who was extremely fond of music.

"Let's play fire truck," Bobby suggested, boldly.

"Oh, no," the little girl

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"Let's play fire truck," Bobby suggested, boldly.

"Oh, no," the little girl

commanded in peremptory tones. "You sit right down and we'll sing 'Hallelujah.' "

Frequently, it is not the most expensive toy which gives the most pleasure. A little niece, presented with a beautiful new wax doll with real hair and sleepy eyes, lovingly clutched to her bosom her old rag doll, Lucinda. Often, too, the plaything which the child enjoys



most is not actually a toy at all. Large spools, cardboard boxes, pots and pans from Mother's kitchen, and articles of adult clothing for "dressing up" may interest him more than any toy that can be purchased. Besides being inexpensive, these "home" toys have another advantage over commercial toys—they can be cleaned more easily and effectively.

It should be kept in mind, too, that the child does not need a great number of toys at one time; he needs only variety enough to allow him to change from one pastime to another as his interest lags. I know a wise mother who, after her little girl has had an opportunity to see and admire the many toys which she receives each Christmas from a host of admiring relatives, quietly puts some of them away, to be brought out again when the child tires of the current supply.

Properly selected toys aid in a child's motor development. Pudgy baby hands and feet need guidance, and toys can make them more skillful. For instance, pounding boards, which are especially popular with two-, three-, and four-year-old boys and girls, aid in muscular development and coordination. There are several good ones on the market. One fascinated my three-year-old niece, keeping her fat little hands busy for hours, and even her six-year-old sister enjoyed it. This toy consists of a bench, wooden hammer, and pegs which may be hammered into a hole. The pegs go through a passageway and then tumble out, ready for the process to start all over again. A slightly more complicated version is the double-hammer nail set, with bright wooden parts for two children to nail into pounding boards. It is especially helpful in teaching rhythm and cooperation between children.

Push and pull toys also appeal to children of preschool age and are helpful in teaching body control. A child gains a feeling of confidence and security from pulling a simple toy along with him as he crawls about in his play pen. When he is learning to walk, such toys give him a sense of balance and coordination. Among the fascinating push and pull toys now on the market are color rollers, rattletraps which click merrily along, to the delight of the toddler, and a vast number of simple wooden toys which can be taken apart and put back together again. Buses, wagons, automobiles and the so-called "train apart," which has removable smokestacks, freight and couplings, are particularly helpful. These become doubly popular when blocks or other small toys can be loaded into them. One clever but inexpensive toy of this type is the Brownie Bear cart, driven by a bear with a gong, which tinkles gaily as the wagon is pulled back and forth.

Nests and boxes which fit into each other can fascinate a child for hours and are useful in teaching accuracy and size. The child learns by a trial and error process, to get one box into another or to fit a peg into its proper hole. He may fail at first but through repetition he finally succeeds, strengthening his muscles and gradually bringing them under control. Although the interest span of a baby is short, I have known a child only eighteen months old to play for an amazingly long time with a collection of boxes which her grandmother kept to amuse the young visitor.

Four- and five-year-olds enjoy somewhat more complex toys than do toddlers. Various types of assembly sets of pieces which fit together are helpful in training small hands and in developing coordination between eyes and hands. Simple puzzles of from four to six pieces, large colored wooden blocks, and junior erector sets consisting of plastic and rubber pieces, are good. Slightly more complicated are the village set, which makes some eight or ten structures, and the hobby lumberyard from which a little cart, truck, toy woodshed and real birdhouses can be built. Tricycles, kiddie kars and other pedal toys help to develop the muscles in small legs.

Besides helping in the biological progress of the child, toys should be good and pleasant teachers. Playthings for very young children should be chosen with an eye to developing their sensitivity to sight and sound. Noisemakers, which may be only pleasantly noisy (as the rain rattle, for instance), help train a baby to listen for sounds. Variety of color, size and shape of toys assists in strengthening his powers of observation and discrimination. An infant cannot distinguish pale



colors, such as pink and light blue, usually considered baby colors. His eyes respond best to bright red and yellow; in fact, a bright red balloon over a baby's bed is an excellent toy.

As the child grows older, one of the criteria for judging the value of a toy is whether it will hold his attention over a period of time. Toys should "dangle new interests" before young eyes and, if possible, uncover unknown talents. Included in this category are elec-

trical, architectural, chemistry and geology sets; spelling games; the old but still popular game of Authors; and home movies with travel films. A great variety of playthings, particularly hobby materials of many types, frequently lead to avocations which, if developed, will enrich the life of the individual not only during his youth but throughout adult life. Among these are photography kits for developing films and printing pictures; record albums; supplies for needlecraft, weaving, metalcraft, drawing and painting, woodworking and beadcraft; whittling sets, consisting of soft wood and a sharp knife for what has been called the "oldest and easiest of the crafts"; and collector sets of all kinds—flower, insect, stamp and coin. There are also on the market an infinite number of games which are excellent teachers, not so much to inculcate facts as to develop desirable social qualities, such as cooperating and sharing with others, and knowing how to be a good loser as well as a good winner.

Projects and games which bring the members of the family closer together by developing mutual interests, should be encouraged. Different age groups learn from each other. Children should not, however, be made to feel that they must always have companionship in play. They should be encouraged, also, to learn to play alone. When a child attempts to do something, as for instance to fit a block or peg into the proper hole, he should be allowed to try and try again until he succeeds, unless he asks for assistance. Indeed, if an adult or older child takes over, the small youngster may easily lose interest in a toy which fascinated him when he was limited to his own resources for making it "go." Developing in a child a talent for amusing himself may stand him in good stead for the rest of his days, helping him to attain a rich and satisfying life.

Christmas toys that measure up to these criteria will contribute to the health and happiness of the boys and girls who receive them.

By Ida M. Pardue

Season's Eatin's



WHAT'S COOKING in your home for Christmas dinner? Turkey and all the trimmings? More than likely, because turkey is THE Christmas fare in the United States. But in other lands the holiday menu is quite different.

In Austria and Denmark the holiday bird is a tender roast goose. Danish cooks fill their birds with a tasty dressing of prunes and apples. In Estonia and Bulgaria the preference is given to roast pork. The Estonians cook just the head of the pig, and round out their menu with turnips and potatoes.

Piradzini, delicious meat pies, replace turkey in Latvia. And in Italy, it's a dish of eels stewed in wine. Norwegians enjoy huge quantities of Christmas cod, dished up with drawn butter and boiled potatoes.

Albanians serve a variety of dishes—chicken, lamb, tripe or meat pie—but more often the meal is the famous Albanian broth flavored with lemon juice and eggs. Fish soup and cabbage is always served in Lithuanian homes.

Many Armenians believe in an old legend which tells about the Virgin Mary dining on spinach before Christ's birth, and so this green vegetable is a must at Armenian feasts on Christmas Eve.

During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the head of a wild boar was the *pièce de résistance* served at English Christmas tables. The English in the vicinity of Oxford still consider a boar's head as the finest Christmas entree.

Instead of the pumpkin and mince pies without which no American dinner is complete, Austrians love their traditional almond-and-rose-oil tarts, flaky pastries with centers of nuts and raisins. The Danes, Finns and Swedes delight in rich rice pudding, but in England plum pudding is still the reigning favorite.

In Rumania an old, complicated recipe for *turta,* a traditional Christmas cake, occupies the attention of housewives on December 23. *Turta* is a symbolic food, and requires great skill to make. The rich, flaky dough is rolled thin as tissue, not only to insure delicacy, but also because the layers represent the wrapping garments of the infant Jesus. The dough is filled with a mixture of honey, sugar and walnuts. Sometimes hemp seed juice is used for flavoring.

Mexican *señoras* fry stacks of *bunuelos,* wafer-thin pancakes, to be spread with sugar sauce before eating.

Perhaps the most unusual yuletide dessert is the cranberry soup so popular in Estonia. Wild cranberries are stewed, and potato starch and sugar added for thickening and flavor. This is eaten with thick cream, like the oat pudding of Lithuania. Lithuanians have for generations made special yuletide bread. The loaves are dusted with poppy seeds, and then a design of the Christ Child is pressed into the tops before baking. The loaves serve as table centerpieces.

In Cornwall, quantities of currant cakes are baked, one for each person—an old, old custom which has come down through the centuries.



"Woe! Woe! Woe!" Joseph cried aloud. "The light
Of joy is gone out of my soul!" . . .

Joseph

by

Charles E. McLean

ILLUSTRATED BY THE AUTHOR'S SON
JIM MCLEAN

HAIL, HELI!" Joseph said.

"And hail to thee,
My son! I trust that thou art well, and that
Thy sojourn in Egypt hath profited thee
Much!"

"Much, good Heli, much! But not in gold
Or worldly store. I sought for knowledge as
My greatest gain—to learn how best to ply
My trade and serve my fellow man. He gains
Who learns, good Heli, and all his gains he
Shares with those he serves!"

"It is so, my son;
Yet when I saw thy face but now, I feared
Thy journey had but loss and sorrow brought,
Thy visage was that dark!"

"'Tis true, Heli,
But I was wroth because of idle tongues
That wag! Ere thou didst come into mine house
I chanced to hear some babblers' evil speech
About an erring maid. This is a sin
So base that all that is within my soul"—
And Joseph's eyes flashed scorn—"doth truly hate
The thought of it! If judge we must, and so
Condemn the sinning soul, let righteousness
Be in our hearts; upon our lips, and guide
Our judgment, too!"

"And knowest thou the name
Of her," good Heli, anxious, asked, "of whom
The idle babblers spake?"

"Not I! Nor would I know!
If she hath sinned, let them their accusations
Make; I heed no such injurious speech save
To rebuke it!"

"And, yet," said Heli, sad
And troubled in his heart, "thou knowest well
That woman is the weaker vessel!"

"Nay!
I did but hear it said she was! I know
That on her virtue and her strength great hopes
Depend! And she it is who keeps alive
The purest, brightest dreams of men! I am,
Good Heli, not a friend to him who fain
Would scorn the worth of womankind!"

"But thou,
My son," and Heli's tones were pleading now,
"Thyself hath seen fair blossoms blasted by
A brutish hand, and cast away!"

"But more
And fairer blossoms climb the Wall, beyond
The reach of selfish men!"

"O Joseph!" good
Heli cried, in deep distress, "I am come
To tell thee what is in mine heart! But thou
Hast made mine office doubly hard for me!
I fear the news I bring will give thee pain—
Deep, and piercing pain—thy Mary—!"

"Heli!
Speak! She is not dead!"

"Nay, Joseph, she is
Well!"

"Then speak! For naught thou could'st say of her
In truth, could give me pain!"

"Say'st thou so? O
Joseph, say'st thou so? O thou too trusting
And unseeing man, thy Mary is with child!"
And Joseph, reeling back, as though he had
Within his breast a mortal wound, cried out:
"Heli, thou art mad!"

"So be it! Mad I am,
But 'tis with grief o'er that I tell thee now!
Mary is with child! But that she ever
Was a duteous maiden, and that she wears,
E'en now, a tenderness and faith so strange,
I could but blast her with a father's curse!"

Long Joseph stood in silence, stunned by words
Unnatural and unreal, but words which ran
Like fiery darts through his defenseless soul!
"Mary is with child!" The words beat in his brain;
His lips could say them not, nor could he yet
Believe the cruel, stabbing truth they framed!
They dropped like molten lead on living flesh;
They walked across his aching heart like soldiers
On a death march to some cruel, lonely Cross!
Until, like one both aged and infirm
Before his time, he turned him, faltering,
To his guest! But Heli, loath to see such
Grief, had softly stolen forth into the night—
Into the night, the night whose shadows are
A cloak for shame, and yet a mantle kind
For those who sorrow for that shame; the
Night which blots out earthly beauty, only
To cover earthly stains; into the night
Whose shadows loose the hounds of sin to prowl,
But shrouds the pitfalls where they meet their doom;
Into the night, where man must walk by faith,
And where, unveiled o'erhead, are the Eternal Stars
Whose pale and holy lights plead for the pure,
The beautiful, and the true, and stir to
Life, in men, a deathless Hope! And Joseph,
Too, stole softly forth into the night!

There is a touch of healing and of strength
About the scenes and memories one treasures
In one's heart. As David yearned for water
From the well of Bethlehem, or as exiles,
Lonely, seek a path that leads them home, so
Joseph sought a quiet dell where, as a lad,
He played, and where bright dreams had fledged and soared,
And there, outstretched upon the dewy sod,
He sought to gain the peace of yesteryears,
And comfort from the pleasant, friendly earth!

"Woe! Woe! Woe!" Joseph cried aloud. "The light
Of joy is gone out of my soul! For me
The morrow's sun need never rise to light
Up what is now a pain to see! O dreary
World! Where is thy hope which bade me dream?
My dreams—Their ruins mock me! Yet, how tender
And how great are dreams which, shattered, leave such
Misery! My mind is like a captive beast
From whose dark pit no pathway leadeth up
To freedom and repose! True it is that
Sincere love can ne'er a breastplate wear,
But ventures all in unrestrained devotion
And deeper scars must bear! Deeper scars? Nay!
Nay, it cannot be, for sinner loses
More than sinned against, and—O Mary!
What heavy burdens weigh within thy heart
To haunt thy sleep, to mar thy peace, and waste
Thy strength in brooding, silent, secret grief!
For thou art fettered, fast, in Nature's chains
To wait—to wait, and then, to sorrow more!
Would God that I could bear it all for thee!"

The sluggish hours dragged slowly by! The sand
Ran out and turned and turned and ran again!
And Joseph watched the stars pass on parade,
And, as he watched, his heart to anger, deep,
Was stirred with thoughts of Mary's grief, and
Of the carping, loveless tongues whose caustic
Wagging well might drive her to despair! "I
Dread the morrow," Joseph, weary, said, "when
Every countenance a question, dark, will
Wear—and foolish questions never want for tongue—
And every morrow, with its little men,
Each bearing in his heart a stain of sin
He seeth not for other sinners, watching!
Our little world is broken now, and changed,
And 'twixt us is an ever deepening gulf!
But o'er its yawning deep I ne'er will cast
Reproach on Mary! And, but that the Law
Requires, her heart shall feel no needless pain
Because of me, as humbly I do bear
My lot! But day dawns! The morning stars
More brightly shine among their fading fellows.
And mark! How near to earth they seem! It is
As though they gather close about to show
That God is pleased with me! And wondrous Peace—
As I have never known before—doth flood
My soul! And now, as night is swallowed up
In day, my weary eyes would close in sleep!
Sleep—sweet . . . restful . . . sleep!"

The morning sunlight streamed into the dell,
And Mary, passing, found her Joseph there,
And standing near she saw, with tear-filled eyes,
His soiled clothes and matted hair, and read
The story of that lonely night!

"He knoweth!"
She whispered to her yearning, troubled heart;
"He knoweth—and Oh, I must go hence! I must!
I must!"

She tarried long enough to roll
A rounded stone to shield the face of Joseph
From the sun, and turned away, now knew she'd
Loosed a tiny stone and so aroused him!

"Mary!"

She stopped and, trembling, waited in
The path, and lifted not her eyes to see
Him drawing near.

"Nay, Mary, tremble not,
Nor blush, nor turn thy face aside! I know
Thy blessed secret, now! For God hath spoken
Unto me and understanding given!
And lo! I, too, am blest with thee forever!
For I shall shield and buckler be to thee;
And what of anguish or reproach there be,
Together we shall share it! This, Mary,
Is a thing that standeth heavy on our faith!
But thanks be unto God who hath given
Unto me a part in this, so sacred, trust—
To know, with thee, the joy of guiding
The footsteps of this Wondrous, Wondrous Child!

(*Continued on page* 31.)



A Story by HELEN DUNSCOMBE MARBLE



Tonight will be too late . . . tell them tonight will be too late . . . but the words stuck in her throat.

ILLUSTRATED BY BETH KRUSH

The Angel wit

ALL DAY Nikki watched the weather. A hundred times she had gone to the window, a thin little girl with dark eyes too big in her pale face, to peer up anxiously at that strip of sky she could see between Burkhardt's Meat Market and the delicatessen.

The sky stayed ominously dark, the air raw and cold. Just like that other time right after Thanksgiving when it snowed so much. But no, it could not do that again; there *couldn't* be another blizzard just the day before the Christmas pageant. Nikki drew her breath in sharply. The beautiful Christmas pageant at the Girls Club! Nikki was to be an angel. . . .

That other storm, it had been an unusual one. The busses could hardly push their way along. Many were stuck. Ma had to walk all the way over from Third Avenue when she came from the store where she worked in the basement. She came in cross and exhausted after plowing through snow nearly to her knees. And when she discovered Nikki's wet feet and legs she was crosser still. She and Aunt Ellie had quarreled about that.

"You might have looked after her!" Ma scolded. "Your day off and all. You know Nikki's bad throat."

The worst of it was that Nikki did get sick. She had stayed out too long, so delighted with the swirling snow that turned the grimy city streets for a brief time strangely white and unfamiliar. Ma lost two days' work taking care of her.

Pa was cross, too. "Looky here, kid!" he had said, and Ma nodded. "You don't go out in the snow no more! The next time you stay *in*, d'ya hear?"

For once he and Ma and Aunt Ellie had agreed. As a rule they bickered and quarreled about almost everything, it seemed. Aunt Ellie was Pa's sister. She had come to live with them when Uncle Thad went to the sanatorium. Soon

Only One Wing

after that, Ma took back her old job in the basement. Ma said she was tired all the time, now. Perhaps she was. She didn't look so pretty. There was a frown between her eyebrows that had been so smooth and nice. She worried about Vanny . . . he was fourteen, Nikki was nine . . . and she said Pa was cross. He was, too. Not a bit like he used to be when he worked in the factory. He didn't talk much now, and when he did, it usually was to snap at you. It was better since he'd got another job, but he didn't like it very well on the night shift.

Nothing was like it used to be. The worst of all was the change in Pa and Ma.

If they only, *only* could see that beautiful Christmas pageant! It was so beautiful! It made her throat ache just to think of it. And the feeling inside her to know she was part of it, an angel in a beautiful, filmy white robe, with little, shiny gold wings on her shoulders, part of the beauty, the glory, the radiance . . . it always took her breath.

THE GIRLS CLUB . . . it was a wonderful place! She hadn't been so lonesome or minded things so much since Maida had taken her there. Maida Burkhardt was eleven, and already she knew all the answers. Her patronizing attitude didn't bother Nikki. She humbly accepted the fact that Maida was superior, so the two got on very well together.

Three weeks ago there had been an unforgettable day at the Girls Club. The head lady—that was Miss Chase—told the girls about the entertainment planned for Christmas. The girls, squeaking with excitement, crowded about her, begging to be in it. Of course, Maida would be chosen; her pink and white complexion, that blond hair. Nikki was not surprised when Maida was picked to be an angel in the big tableau. But then when Miss Chase looked at her and said, "You, too," Nikki had turned quite white and trembled so she could hardly stand. Fortunately, in the general hubbub no one seemed to notice, and soon she was all right again. Maida had been quite gracious about it. "Pro'bly they need someone little and dark to fill in at the back," she told her.

As a matter of fact, when they were put in their places at the first rehearsal, both she and Maida *were* over at one side, near the back. Not that it mattered to Nikki. To be in it at all was wonderful enough.

One of the older girls was Mary. She wore a long, flowing, blue gown, with a heavenly blue veil over her smooth, fair hair, and she held a large baby doll in her arms. Three tall dark girls were the Wise Men. Another was Joseph. Then came the angels, tiers of them standing behind Mary. There was soft music offstage; a spotlight. Nikki hadn't missed a rehearsal. Every day she was there, avidly watching, absorbing every detail of the whole pageant.

It was so beautiful. If Pa and Ma just saw it . . . just *felt* it . . . and saw her . . . everything would be all right. If *only* they would go. . . .

"Will you, Ma, *will* you?"

"I don't know," Ma had begun. For some reason the eager little face seemed to irritate her. "It's nothing but a lot of silly girls dressed up in cheesecloth and cardboard; and I don't know whether I can get off at the store or not; or whether I want to bother if I do."

Pa had snorted. "*Me* go to your Girls Club! Whatever for? A pageant, huh? What's that?"

"I'm to be an angel, Pa," Nikki said unsteadily.

"Well, that's somethin' you *ain't* around here! Oh, pipe down, kid!" She was struggling with the tears. "Sure I'll go . . . I guess. What about it, Mabel?" He turned suddenly to Ma.

"Well, maybe," she answered sullenly.

THAT WAS the best Nikki could hope for. It wasn't much; a little thing might turn them either way, she knew. If Ma were extra tired, and she might be, although so far she had been kept in the corset department at the store, which was easier at this season; if Pa met any of his old factory pals; if Vanny got in a scrap again, and Ma wouldn't leave. . . . There were so many *ifs*.

She heard her father stirring in the bedroom. All day she had tiptoed about, as quiet as a mouse. Ma had made her promise to stay in because her throat was scratchy. He must have slept well; longer than usual. It was almost time for Ma.

The door opened and he came out, walking heavily. Brushing by her without speaking, he went into the kitchen to make a sandwich for his lunch. Nikki followed timidly. He stood leaning against the sink, a big man, even with the discouraged droop of his shoulders. His mouth looked grim and set.

Nikki hesitated a moment. "It won't snow, will it, Pa?"

"Huh?" He turned away, suddenly aware of her in the doorway. "Oh, it's you. Snow? I dunno, kid. What's it matter?"

"The pageant, Pa."

"Oh, yeah, the thing-a-ma-jig where you're an angel . . . or a devil, I forget which. Well, have yourself a time, kid."

"But you're comin', Pa! You said"

"Yeah? Okay. Don't bother me now. I'm late. Where's Ellie? What's the matter with her doin' a few things around here?"

"It's her day to see Uncle Thad, Pa."

"Oh, yeah. What a life!" He

(*Continued on page* 20.)



—R.N.S.

A Christmas symbol in Chicago—a 23-story lighted cross that's visible for miles along beautiful Lakeshore Drive.

Christmas legends and Christmas customs vary from country to country, from town to town, and from family to family. Many have survived the centuries. The author here presents a few in . . .

A Wreath of Christmas Symbols

by Maymie R. Krythe

WHAT WOULD Christmas be without such symbols as gaily decorated trees, holly wreaths, lighted candles, shining stars, brilliant poinsettias, or chiming bells? Perhaps when we're making our homes festive, we forget that these decorations have been associated with the holidays for centuries.

The center of a gay scene is, of course, the Christmas tree, which originated in Northern Europe. The Druid priests, in heathen times, led their followers to dark forests to perform rites to their god Thor, at the sacred oak. Then, when these people accepted Christianity, they set up young evergreens in their homes, and replaced the bloody pagan ceremonials with happier ones in honor of Christ's birthday.

The mistletoe, considered sacred by the Druids, was carefully gathered by the priests from the oaks, for they believed it could keep away evil spirits and cure diseases. According to one legend, the mistletoe was condemned to be a parasite because it had furnished the wood for Christ's cross. The holly, too, was said to have been connected with the Master's death, for from it the crown of thorns was supposed to have been made, and the holly berries, formerly white, were stained with Christ's blood. Sprigs of holly were hung on doors to keep away lightning and witches, and were sure to bring good luck.

A lighted candle, large, small, red or green, is a favorite holiday symbol, and sends out Christmas cheer. Caroling by candlelight, both in churches and homes, has become an enjoyable custom. The use of candles in the early Christian church is said to have been taken over from the Jewish Feast of Lights. Since wax was from virgin bees, it was used to symbolize the Virgin Mary.

About A.D. 492, Candlemas Day was established by Pope Gelasius I, in memory of the occasion when Mary and Joseph took the Christ Child to the temple. It is celebrated on February 2, forty days after Christmas. On this day in Rome candles for the entire year are blessed by the pope.

In medieval times, it was customary to light the yule candles when the log was fired, their soft glow illuminating gay scenes of feasting, caroling, and merrymaking. Each evening until Twelfth Night, these tapers were lighted. Often a candle was set in the window to invite the Holy Child in to share their yuletide joys. Several of their poems and stories were based on the legend that Christ, dressed as a beggar, might come to test their hospitality.

In Norway, many thought the Christmas candles radiated blessings. They therefore placed food and clothing in the candlelight that they might receive a benediction. If a candle failed to burn until morning, it was thought a death would occur in the family. The remnants of the holiday tapers were burned during a storm, to protect the home, and farmers would smear the tallow over their ploughshares to insure an abundant harvest. They even marked their cattle with bits of the candles to ward off injury or disease.

In Austria, at the beginning of Advent, a wreath with four candles was placed in a window. The first was lighted on the first Sunday in Advent, the next on the second, and so on until all four were burning. French children enjoyed lighting three candles, of three different colors, symbolic of the Trinity, and



—"Dick" Whittington.

A Christmas symbol in Glendale, California. A "star of Bethlehem" burns brightly atop the Hall of the Crucifixion in Forest Lawn Memorial Park.

Italian youngsters recited Christmas poems as their candles glowed.

School children in Lancashire, England, used to give their teachers candles for Christmas gifts, and merchants gave them to their customers. For some time, Church of England officials decreed against the use of candles in church at the holidays; however, many clergymen continued to use them. In the nineteenth century there was a revival of this custom; and today most churches are decked with candles during the Christmas season.

Here in America, we enjoy candlelight services with carol singing. In old Bruton Church, so well restored in Williamsburg, Virgina, colonial customs are revived in an impressive service. And in

(*Continued on page* 31.)





Another California Christmas scene—a prize-winning tree in the window of a Long Beach home.

And inside a Long Beach, California, home was this Christmas decoration.

Starette, the Christmas Snowflake

by Evelyn Witter

MOTHER SNOWFLAKE called all her children together on the outer edge of Grey Cloud. They were all big snowflakes and wanted to drift by themselves. But Starette, who was tiny and delicate, clung to her mother.

"Children," said Mother Snowflake, "this is the day for which we have been waiting. This is the day before Christmas. We are going down to earth to gladden the hearts of people. Everyone likes snow, especially for Christmas, so I want all of you to be seen."

"It will be lots of fun, Mother," chorused the full snowflakes as they jumped joyously into the air.

Starette hung close. "May I go down with you, Mother?"

"We can start together, but we will surely get separated," Mother Snowflake replied.

"Oh!" cried Starette, "I'm so little. I won't make it! I'll split to pieces before I get there. I know I will!"

"Let me take a close look at you and see," Mother Snowflake twinkled. Then she spun Starette around very carefully. "You'll make it, darling," she said. "You may be little but you're perfectly shaped. You're a beautiful little star with six strong points. I know you'll fall beautifully and shine brightly, too."

"Will that make people on earth happy?" Starette wanted to know.

"Very," Mother Snowflake



smiled. "Now remember to sit in a place where you can be seen. I'm sure if you are seen you will give pleasure. I'm depending on you for that."

"But when will I see you and all my brothers and sisters again?"

"After you've given your sparkle for Christmas, and then watered Mother Earth, you will be drawn right back up to Grey Cloud with the rest of us. When we are all back together again, we will have a fine time telling about all the places we have been."

"All right, Mother, I'll try to be the kind of Christmas snowflake you want me to be," agreed Starette as she and her mother jumped into the air.

Then it happened just the way Mother Snowflake said it would. Starette was separated from her mother by a strong current of air. The current wafted her here and there. Then the wind came by and bounced her around. She stayed together through it all.

As Starette came closer to earth she began searching for a place to sit. Before she could decide where she wanted to go, the wind laid her on top of a roof.

"Oh, dear!" Starette crunched. "I can't stay here. No one will ever see me away up here. Mother will be so disappointed. I promised her I would go where people could see me."

But the wind hurried by to catch the next snowflake, and Starette was left alone. She wanted to cry. Still she knew she should not turn to water yet. She lay on the roof a long time. If Grey Cloud had not covered the sun, she surely would have melted before her time.

"I must get off of here," she kept moaning to herself. In these sad moments she thought about her mother. She thought of how carefully her mother had turned her over and over to make sure her points were right.

"Why didn't I think of my points before!" Starette whispered happily to herself. "I can roll on my six points!"

And she did. Over and over she went. At long last she felt herself floating off the roof!

What relief she felt as she was wafted gently through the brisk air. Now she had a chance to be seen. She glanced everywhere for a place to sit. Finally, she saw a green tree near a white house. It was in houses that people lived, she remembered. She settled gracefully on one of the evergreen's long needles. She was very comfortable there. Besides that,

(*Continued on page* 31.)



with Young Children

Theme for December: GOD'S BEST GIFT

A WORD TO PARENTS

The materials on this page and on the next two pages are for your use in moments of worship with your children. If you have a family worship service daily in your home, some of the materials here may be used at that time. If you use *Secret Place*, you may find that some of them fit into the meditations in that booklet.

Or, if you and your child have quiet moments together, apart from the regular family worship, the poems, songs and other materials given here may help you share an experience of worship.

Some of the poems, songs and prayers suggested here are from the graded church school materials. If your church uses these, your child will have brought home the books or leaflets in which these poems and other materials appear. He will enjoy using these with you at home.

The worship resources given here are divided into three sections: (*a*) for the 3-year-olds; (*b*) for the 4- and 5-year-olds; (*c*) for the 6-, 7-, and 8-year-olds. Should your child want to make his own book of devotions, cut, or let your child cut, along the colored border of each small page. He may paste each of these pages into a loose-leaf or spiral notebook, or on sheets of paper of uniform size to be tied together.

It is hoped that the materials on these pages will help you as you guide your child in worship experiences.

To Use with Children Three Years Old . . .

This year your three-year-old child will pay more attention to Christmas activities than ever before. He can begin to know that Christmas is a very special time. It is a time of showing love through the giving of gifts. It is a time of beautiful music and the singing of carols. It is a time of joy and friendliness. It is a time for remembering Jesus, God's best gift to the world.

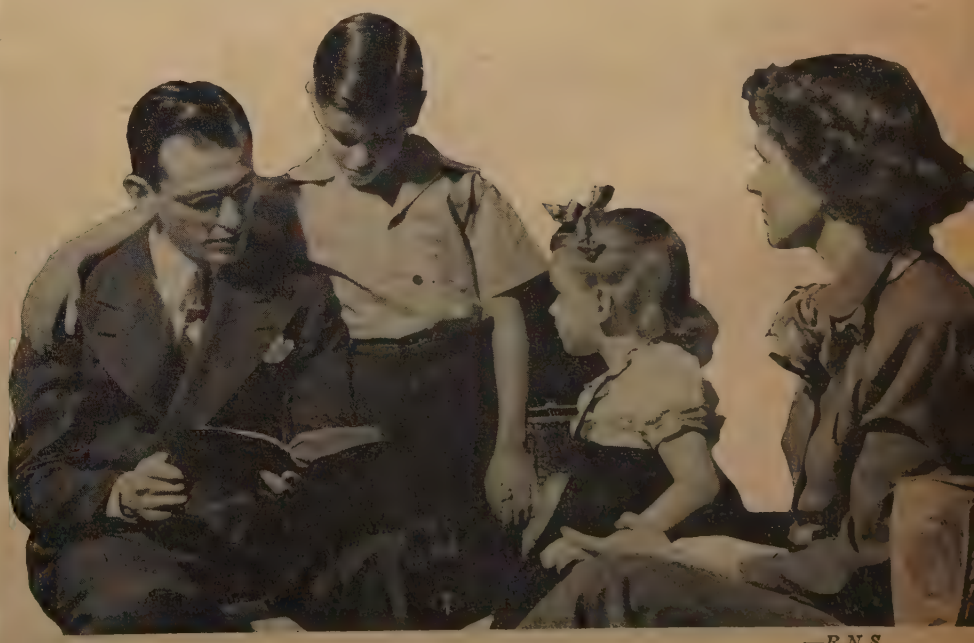
Your three-year-old can understand and enjoy the Christmas story, when it is told in very simple words and in a very simple way. He can enjoy looking at a picture of Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus. He can enjoy hearing such Christmas songs as "Away in a Manger."

Much of the activity and preparation that accompanies the Christmas season may be confusing to a young child. It is important that your three-year-old is given the attention and time to which he is accustomed and that he does not feel left out or slighted because of the Christmas rush.

If you yourself look forward to Christmas, if you enjoy Christmas, if you plan so that you do not have to rush to get things done, and if you plan for observing Christmas in a Christian way instead of in an entirely materialistic way, your child, too, will feel the loving spirit of Christmas and will want to say with you, "I'm glad for Christmas."

Think often during this month of the verse from the Bible which embodies the true meaning of Christmas:

He loved us and sent his Son.
—1 John 4:10.



—*R.N.S.*

To Use with Children Four and Five Years Old . . .

(Cut along the broken lines and paste each small page into your own book about God's love and care.)

JESUS' BIRTHDAY

He was called Jesus.—Luke 2:21.

Gentle Child

One winter night in Bethlehem,
Far, far away,
The little Jesus Child was born;
Praise Him today.

A gentle Child He must have been,
Sweet, sweet, and dear;
How His mother must have loved
Holding Him near!

—Florence Pedigo Jansson

Stories: "When Jesus Was Born," *My Bible Leaflet,* No. 10; "A Loving Gift for Jesus," *My Bible Leaflet,* No. 61.

Prayer

We are glad for Jesus' birthday. Thank you, God, for Jesus. Amen.

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS

He was called Jesus.—Luke 2:21.

Away in a Manger

Away in a manger,
No crib for His bed,
The little Lord Jesus
Laid down His sweet head.
The stars in the sky
Looked down where He lay,
The little Lord Jesus,
Asleep on the hay.

—Martin Luther

Stories: "A Box of Christmas Surprises," *My Bible Leaflet,* No. 11; "A Story of Jesus' Birthday," *My Bible Leaflet,* No. 62.

Prayer

We are glad for the story of the first Christmas. Thank you, God. Amen.

CHRISTMAS EVE

Let us love one another.—1 John 4:7.

On Christmas Eve

On Christmas Eve, when work is done
And happy families gather near,
Light up again the Christmas tree
And feel the quiet Christmas cheer.

Then read once more from God's dear Word
That song of peace the shepherds heard.
And grateful families everywhere
Will offer up their thank-you prayer.

—Harriet Hardy Comer

Story

"Some Shepherds Visit Jesus," *My Bible Leaflet,* No. 63.

CHRISTMAS DAY

Let us love one another.—1 John 4:7.

Christmas Day

We sing songs,
We give gifts,
We hear the Christmas story;

We read poems,
We greet friends
And have a happy time;

We feel glad
And give thanks
For happy Christmas Day!

—Juanita Purvis

Story

"A Happy Christmas Day," *My Bible Leaflet,* No. 64.

To Use with Boys and Girls Six, Seven and Eight Years Old . . .

(Cut along the broken lines and paste each small page into your own book of devotions.)

A GIFT FOR ALL

He loved us and sent his Son.—1 John 4:10.

A Christmas Gift for All

In Bethlehem where Mary found
An humble cattle stall,
A little Child was born one night,
God's Christmas gift to all.

Because that Christmas gift is full
Of love it came to bring,
I'll share it in the deeds I do
And in the songs I sing.

—Florence Pedigo Jansson

Story

"The First Christmas," Pupil's book, First Year Primary, Fall Quarter, page 33.

CAROLS AT CHRISTMAS

He loved us and sent his Son.—1 John 4:10.

Christmas Star

The Christmas tree stands tall and green
Beside the fireplace.
From every branch hang chains of light
Like colored fairy lace.

And gifts for mother, dad, and John
Beneath the branches hide,
And right in front are paints for me
And other gifts beside.

But best of all, I like the star
That shines above them all;
It speaks of that first Christmas
And a Baby in a stall.*

—Blanche Hoke

Story

"The Angels' Song," Pupil's book, Second Year Primary, Fall Quarter, page 33.

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JESUS' BIRTHDAY

He loved us and sent his Son.—1 John 4:10.

In Another Land and Time

In another land and time,
Long ago and far away,
Jesus Christ our Lord was born
On the first glad Christmas day.

Little children He did love
With a tender heart and gay.
Carol then, each Christian child,
Praise our Lord this Christmas day.

—Author Unknown

Song

"Away in a Manger," Pupil's book, Second Year Primary, Fall Quarter, page 34.

THE BOY JESUS

Let us love one another; for love is of God.
—1 John 4:7.

When He Was Young Like Me

I like to think of Jesus
When he was young like me;
I'm sure his mother taught him
Of God's love, tenderly.
And Joseph took the time to make
For him some special toy;
Yes, I like to think of Jesus
When he was still a boy.

—Winifred Nabours

Prayer

Thank you, God, for Jesus. We are glad that we celebrate his birthday. Help us to grow as Jesus grew. Amen.



By Marion Sue Heron

Here, the co-ed daughter of a Hearthstone *writer takes her turn in describing life in the Heron family. And if Frances Dunlap Heron weren't too modest and polite, she'd proudly say, "I told you so!"*

OUR FAMILY—in chronological order, Grandmother, Dad, Mom, Al, myself, Eleanor, and Bill—has always enjoyed doing things together: taking vacation trips, going on picnics to the forest preserve on hot July days, going to the natural history museum on a Saturday afternoon, spending a day at the circus or amusement park, or just sitting at home in front of the fire on a Sunday evening drinking spicy, hot Russian tea.

The summers spent in the cool north woods of Wisconsin have fond memories for me, but nothing can compare with the glorious month of August, 1949, when we went on a tour through the West. Perhaps one reason I enjoyed this trip so much was that it was probably to be the last big trip for a long time to come, for Al and I were to enter college in the fall of 1950, and long vacations would soon be out of the question.

I remember vividly a day we spent in the Black Hills of South Dakota. In the morning, we saw the Badlands and Mount Rushmore, both breath-taking sights. In the afternoon, we rented some horses and rode through the Black Hills, taking in all of their beauty. After the horseback ride, we went for a swim in a calm, cool mountain lake. I think, however, that the best part of the day came at twilight, when we visited a little zoo nestled in the mountains. We were the only ones there that evening, and everything was serene and still, with a gold and red sunset sending streams of color across the sky. If I had only one more day to live, I would want to share again this one perfect day with my family.

Happy times cannot, however, be the only test of family harmony. Our family can manage a laugh even when unexpected difficulties arise. I remember one beautiful autumn day when we were driving our car in the country, Dad backed into a ditch, trying to get off a narrow country road. That was unfortunate indeed. Dad tried for half an hour to get the car out of the ditch, and no one was in a state of hilarity. I couldn't stand the gloom any longer.

"Would anyone like to hear a joke?" I asked, meekly. My sister gave me a "how can you think of such stupid things at a time like this" frown, but Dad said, "Sure, I could use a good joke right now." So I told a joke. It may have been corny, but everyone felt better. My mother and sister had to walk half a mile to telephone my brother for the purpose of helping us out of our predicament, and it was an hour before he arrived. The incident, however, did not leave completely bad memories.

My father has a grand sense of humor. Once when Al was little, he said to Dad, "Gee, Daddy, I'm glad you're so cheerful. Billy's daddy is an old sourpuss."

In the summer of 1943, our family had a little Japanese girl visit us for three weeks to attend our vacation church school. Grace was a very bashful girl at the time, and Dad's jokes appalled her. She has visited us many times since then, however, and has developed a delightful sense of humor. One reason for this is, I'm sure, her association with our family.

Harmless pranks are something our whole family employs. I remember well one that my father played. The people next door have many friends from all over the world, and have offered their hospitality to them whenever they are up "Chicago way." One day in June, the Watkinses had several Russian friends visiting them. Mrs. Watkins had been working hard all day, fixing dinner for the company. She was thankful that there was enough room for them all to spend the night. Dad, with an evil twinkle in his eye, picked up the phone and asked for the Watkins' number. Mrs. Watkins came to the phone.

"Allo," said Dad, in a high Chinese voice. "This is Mr. Hoo Fly Hi from Chung King. I and five friends are in Chicago, and we have no place to stay. Out of kindness of your heart, dear Mrs. Watkins, would you let us stay with you?"

Of course, Mrs. Watkins could not refuse such a humble request. Besides, she had offered her home to any of her foreign friends visiting in Chicago. In tears, she went to every house in the neighborhood borrowing sheets, blankets, and food for the imaginary Mr. Hoo Fly Hi of Chung King and his five friends. We all comforted the poor woman when she came begging sustenance from us, and no one gave the secret away. Finally, Dad told Mrs. Watkins that there was no Mr. Hoo Fly Hi, and, fortunately, our neighbor was too relieved to be angry.

In our family, we even have fun cleaning the basement. Naturally, this is not my favorite pastime, but when there are lots of people to talk to, the time goes so much faster. There is one thing, however, that we've had to discontinue doing together, and that is singing grace at the table on Sundays. Jasper, our little blond cocker spaniel, who is as spoiled as a baby, would howl most mournfully when we sang; so now we merely say the grace on the sabbath.

There is nothing more fun than gathering around the piano on a Sunday afternoon and singing old favorites (Jasper doesn't seem to mind this; I have never been able to understand why). None of us, except my sister Eleanor, has a voice to brag about, but we're not trying out for the opera, anyway. We're just having a good time.

On a rainy afternoon, someone in the family will suggest that we play a game. Our favorites are Flinch, Authors, Ping-pong, and other table games. At Christmas we received some Spanish and French games, which, besides being fun to play, help us learn the two languages. Even Don, who has not as yet studied a foreign language, is learning foreign expressions. Some of the most intelligent members of the family play chess. I regret to say that I am not very adroit at this game; my twelve-year-old brother plays much better than I do.

Since Mom and Dad have always wanted us to have an understanding of people in other countries, we have had foreign students from the University of Chicago visit us from time to time. Sometimes they are shy at first, but someone, usually Don, "breaks the ice" for them, and before long they are laughing and joking with the rest of us. We always like to hear about their homes and families, and they are grateful for the privilege of visiting in a Christian American home.

When we were small, Mom and Dad never paid us for chores we did around the house, and I am glad that they didn't. Whenever any of us helped to clean house or wash dishes, a "Thank you" from Mom or Dad was payment enough. We felt that what we were doing was a family service. After all, Mom has never been paid for doing the washing and ironing. Why should we be paid! Every Saturday, Dad gave us an allowance, but we understood that it was not in payment for chores.

There are several formulas that we use to keep family harmony. One, as I already have mentioned, is humor; not just humor from funny situations (anyone can find humor in something funny), but in situations that are not so funny.

Gratitude is another vital ingredient which we use. When I was home from school at Christmas, Don was writing a story for his seventh grade English class. He had spent several hours writing the rough copy of the story, and it looked as though he were going to have to spend several more hours writing the finished product. Don had a paper route, too, and he was going to have to get up early the next morning to deliver papers.

"Don," I said, "would you like me to type your story for you?"

"Oh, I would just love you if you did," said Don, and he gave me a kiss. Twelve - year - old boys don't give kisses every day! Doing something for someone is a pleasure if he is grateful for what you do.

Consideration, praise of others' efforts, genuine interest in family activities—all these are important, too. When we were in kindergarten, we would bring home plaques with our handprints on them, and other kindergarten specialties. Mom would seem as pleased to get these as she would a set of fine china dishes. One Mother's Day, when I was about seven, I bought Mom a huge bottle of reeking perfume, which cost me one thin dime. When I gave the vile concoction to her, she said, "My dear, this is lovely!" Bravely she used the perfume until the whole bottle was empty. Little things like this make me realize what wonderful, understanding parents I have. It takes real courage to receive a bottle of cheap perfume and give the impression that it is as welcome as the finest from Paris.

Of course, affairs can't be expected to run smoothly always. Al sometimes feels badly abused when he can't have the family car for the evening. A conversation between my mother and Al on some Friday evening might sound like this:

"Mom, can I have the car tonight? Bob's mother won't let him have their car, and Jim's father has theirs."

"Son," says Mom thoughtfully, "you've had the car every night this week. Don't you think it's Eleanor's turn to have it this evening?"

"Gee whiz, Mom, El doesn't have anywhere to go, and Bob, Jim, and I want to go to the stock-car races."



"Listen here, Al Heron" (from Eleanor, who is reading in the other room), "it so happens that Janet and I want to drive the car to Harvey and go swimming."

"You can take the train," says Al.

"So can you," says El.

Al looks pleadingly at Mom.

"Gee whiz (or holy cow), Mom," says he, "I'm going to be going back to school pretty soon, and then El can have the car every



PRAYER OF A PARENT

On Christmas Day

Dear Heavenly Father:

On this the birthday of your Son, we know you understand that for us the happiest part of Christmas is being together as a family. If on this cold winter day our memories go back to an August ride in the Black Hills, a swim in Green Lake or a picnic at Riverview Park, it will be because love and laughter and harmony belong to Christmas.

As children grow older and separations divide us much of the year, we are all the more thankful for Christmas to bring us together again. This year our circle widens to include our new daughter Betty, Al's bride. Our hearts are full of gratitude in having the loveliness of her personality added to our family. We would share our memories and traditions with her, happy to know that something of our family life will go on living in a new home.

Here we gather around our shining tree, topped by the little angel that has graced every one of our trees and Dad's before us. In the remembered fun of past days, in the joy of this present celebration, and in the hope of continued associations, we say, "Thank you, God, for Christmas. . . . Thank you for families. . . . Thank you for good times together."

Let some bit of light go out from our home, O Father, to help bind families around the world in peace and good will.

Amen.

FRANCES DUNLAP HERON

evening. I think I should have it tonight."

And so the argument goes. Fortunately, I don't get into arguments over the family car because I can't drive.

Eleanor and I share a bedroom when I'm home, and she used to keep her side in a frightful mess. It was irritating enough to have her side of the room stacked with dirty clothes and chewing gum wrappers, but when they drifted to my side, I really became peeved. We would have words over this matter. Sometimes too, I used to get sore when, on her night to wash dishes, El was nowhere to be found. Now that she is almost seventeen, however, she keeps her room in pretty good condition and washes her share of the dishes.

We have a family council which we call to settle important questions—for instance, does El deserve a new dress for the spring dance? Or, should Al have a motor scooter? Everyone in the family has a chance to read the minutes at one of the meetings. (Al still doesn't have a motor scooter.)

Yes, we have had fun in our family. There is so much more to do with seven people than with three (my grandmother lives with us). Furthermore, in our large family we have learned to cooperate and to respect the other person. That there is never a dull moment at our house is pure joy. One day last summer, as I was walking into my bedroom, two small neighborhood boys in Hopalong Cassidy suits told me to "stick 'em up." So if there isn't a member of the family to stir up some excitement, someone else will, at our house.

Last summer my college roommate visited us. After she had returned home, she wrote a letter to me, which ended, "You have a wonderful family, Sue."

I think so, too.

And *we've had fun!*

The Angel with Only One Wing

(*From page* 11.)

picked up the sandwiches and stuffed them in his pocket. He went out without speaking again or looking at her.

Maida called for her the next day. The sky was still overcast, but miraculously there was no snow. Things were better at home, too, although Ma and Pa had fought at breakfast. He had come in just before Ma left and there was an argument. But before he slammed into the bedroom, he had looked back at Nikki. "I ain't forgot about this affair, kid. We'll be there." He scowled at Ma.

"You and who else!" She flounced out of the door, but Nikki somehow didn't worry. When Pa spoke like that . . . they would be there.

Now, surely, the beautiful pageant . . . with her in it . . . would fix everything for them.

THERE WERE wonderful excitement and confusion at the Girls Club. Nikki felt herself swept into it, carried swiftly along just like the paper boats she played with in the gutter when it rained. Girls were lined up before the make-up committee, having superfluous color put on their flushed, excited cheeks. There was marvelous lipstick; even eyeshadow.

"Costumes, girls! Get your costumes!" Miss Chase was everywhere. "Mrs. Brown has your costumes!"

The girls crowded into the next room. The costumes had been carefully allotted, and marked with each girl's name.

How beautiful Maida looked, her stiffly starched embroidered petticoat showing through the filmy white of the angel costume, her hair, unbraided now, hanging on either side of her plump cheeks in hard, yellow ridges.

"Here you are, little girl! This must be yours. It's the last one."

Nikki slipped the white gown over her thin little body, and looked in the box for the wings.

There was only one. One beautiful, shiny, gold wing. She felt a terrible fear.

"Turn around, dear, I'll fasten your wings."

Speechless, Nikki held up the wing.

"But where's the other? Get me the other one."

Nikki swallowed hard and tried to speak.

"There ain't any other wing, Mrs. Brown." That was Maida. "The box is empty." With a swish of her skirt she complacently turned back to the mirror, surreptitiously adding a little more rouge from the box she had slipped in her pocket.

"But there *must* be! There were enough wings yesterday at the dress rehearsal." Mrs. Brown rushed to look in the closet.

Miss Chase looked in. "Come quickly, girls! Get in your places! The audi-

(*Continued on page* 30.)

Advertisers—those modern masters of mass communication—wield tremendous influence, especially in this land of ours with its powerful press, its highly commercialized radio and television, and its gigantic printing industry. A veteran in the field was asked to write, as part of our series on vocations, "A Christian in Advertising." This is what he wrote . . .



Advertising— A Christian Potential

By T. T. Frankenberg

Now a counselor on promotion problems, the author was in the advertising field for 25 years after having spent 18 years as a journalist. He belongs to a Protestant church that has more than a thousand members.

ADVERTISING is one of the newer vocations to engage the time, attention, and energies of large numbers of men and women in America. And it is in this country that it has had its finest flower, its most prolific results, and its greatest rewards.

Practiced in something of a rudimentary fashion since Revolutionary days, it was only at the close of the Civil War that it began to be really significant, and it is only in the last twenty-five years that it has assumed really great proportions. Whether it is an art, a profession, a calling, or a science, those who follow it are not yet agreed. But whichever it is, it is a definite force in the world today and one that is still growing.

Its origin may be traced back to the dim days of Chaldea and its clay tablets, to the Pharaohs of Egypt and the hieroglyphics on their royal tombs, and to notices posted in the forum of Rome or wherever the multitude was wont to gather. Thus its history runs through the centuries, until we come to the present day with all its innovations. But whenever and wherever advertising has been used, it has had but one over-riding purpose—to cause more people to spend or give more money than they otherwise would.

In advertising, as in medicine, the practitioner may be a single person, or he may be part of a group, as in a clinic, where duties and responsibility are divided among many. And as in medicine, each has his specialty: idea man, copywriter, photographer, artist, engraver, typographer, designer, color expert, layout man. The work of one or more of these may be done by a single person, but any big contract usually calls for experts in every field. The general plan and objective are usually outlined in advance conferences. Unlike a medical clinic, there is opportunity for deliberation and for conferences to clear any minor points of disagreement. And unlike a medical operation, an advertisement usually precedes the need, often by months and sometimes by as much as a year.

Minor differences of opinion or technique are not uncommon, but over the years some rules and principles have been evolved that have the weight of moral or intellectual force, and act as guides to thinking and procedure. Thus:

1. Advertising must be truthful. Misrepresentation will be found out, which, in the end, will defeat its purpose.
2. Advertise none but sound goods. Advertising cannot perform miracles. It cannot induce persons to purchase merchandise which they have tried and found wanting.
3. It is useless to advertise your product to persons who cannot use it.
4. Be clear and moderate in your language; the weakest language is the language of superlatives.

The president of one of the greatest railroads in the country is authority for this statement: "The time to quit advertising is *never!*"

An appropriate text for the advertising profession could well be 2 Timothy 2:15: "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth."

Currently, much advertising is done through the printed word. This may be distributed through newspapers, magazines, books and pamphlets. More recently, radio and television have taken an important place in the field. Practically all men and women connected with any one of these diverse media are rated as members of the advertising profession. In the United States there are thousands of them—just how many does not seem to be a matter of record.

Many of these men and women are organized into various groups according to the various lines in which they are particularly interested: writers, illustrators, typographers, design and layout specialists, engravers,

salesmen, paper specialists, and more recently psychologists. Many belong to professional or craft associations, guilds or unions, but there is no one organization that embraces all of them. Most are eligible to more than one organization, and many are members of several. They are truly a diffuse type. Not more than four or five will be found in any average assembly of four or five hundred, such as might constitute an average church. They do not, like the United Commercial Travelers, have any group which, as such, devotes itself to benevolent, philanthropic or religious purposes. Yet, as individuals, they may be found in practically all such organizations set up by other groups and for purposes other than advertising.

What has all this to do with Christian living and the Christian church? For one thing, it suggests what tremendous power those engaged in advertising would have in the United States if united in a common desire to advance the cardinal purposes of the Christian church.

In the year just past, American advertisers spent the staggering sum of $500,000,000 for their clients. American people, subjected to the influence of this advertising, spent over twenty-six billion dollars.

Think of the tremendous force this spending represents! The American people did not spend this vast sum of money out of idle curiosity; they spent it for things they wanted—mostly for things which advertising made them want.

Now, it can be pointed out that advertising is employed to get people to go to church, to give to charity, to support benevolent institutions, to ward off tuberculosis, and to promote health research.[1] There can be no doubt that all of these projects have been advanced by advertisements in their behalf. Yet all of these taken together employ but a small fraction of the advertising talent in the United States. Imagine the force, the impact that a concerted effort of the nation's talent in advertising could bring to bear in a sustained, well-timed, and properly executed effort to advance the Christian cause.



"The only thing about being real good in December is they expect you to keep it up in January!"

This would presuppose that the Christian church is of one mind and one purpose in what it wants and expects to sell—to use the vernacular of the advertiser. Is such a union of mind and purpose possible?

It might be well to ask what are the essentials of an effective advertisement, be it direct mail, newspaper or magazine copy, or any other form of direct sales appeal.

1. It must attract attention; hence the value of clever slogans and attractive headlines.
2. It must arouse interest. This is done by clear, simple and not too long statement of the merits of the article in question.
3. It must create desire. This is done by showing how the acquisition of the article will benefit the user personally.
4. It must inspire decision on the part of the person addressed, to make the article his own.

A fifth essential of all good advertising might well be added—it should be the product of an alert imagination.

These precepts, which have had the approval of at least a half century of practicing advertisers, could be applied to the presentation and advancement of the Christian faith. There is at present a widely distributed effort to increase membership in Christian churches, and advertising has played no small part in this campaign. Judging from reports of increased numbers, this movement seems to be meeting with general success.

If there is one motive in advertising that might be held adverse to Christian thinking, it is that it is so often allied to a selfish motive, urging the customer to buy what the other party wishes to sell, sometimes regardless of its effect upon the consumer. But if the Christian faith is thought of as something a group of devoted followers have experienced and wish to extend to others; then, this, too, may satisfy the last condition of successful advertising. Most Christian denominations have not, so far as the records show, either raised or spent large sums on advertising to bring the crucial messages of the church to those who might, could, and should become adherents of the Christian faith. Yet the followers of that gospel are commanded to make it known to the uttermost parts of the earth.

Could intelligent, concerted, well directed, and consistent advertising bring this about? The answer —so far it has never been tried.

[1]The Advertising Council, a non-profit, non-partisan organization devoted to public service, is one important agency of such advertising.

Working as a TEAM

by Idris W. and Elizabeth N. Jones

We are no longer living in the "Father (or Mother) knows best" days. Those days ended with the passing of the horse and buggy and gas lights. Neither do we live in the "Let children do what they wish" days. They too are gone with last year's hats and last month's songs. More and more frequently we find families of today, especially Christian families, trying to live democratically, trying to give adult and child alike his own part in family decisions, in work and play plans, in spending the family income. We are beginning to realize that it is not enough for a Christian family to attend church, to read the Bible, and to have grace at meals. We must draw our inspiration and guidance from those things, it is true, but we must also instill into our everyday living the respect for persons of all ages that seems to be the very spirit of Jesus' teaching.

It is well to pause often in our daily routine to ask ourselves again, "What are we trying to accomplish as we establish our new home, or as we help little children and adolescents to grow and develop?" Look back, if you can, to the first article in this series, "So You Want a Christian Home!" Consider the family described there. Note the sincere concern of each for the other, the interest in the affairs of the others. Each member of the family was important to the others as a person, each had his own place on the family team. Because he could sense its importance and knew the place was his, he cooperated and worked for the good of the team. Such wholehearted cooperation does not come about immediately. It takes a great deal of wisely guided living to lead the members of the family to the point where cooperative, democratic actions are second nature. Sometimes, ironically, it is we parents who need it the most!

When individuals can live democratically in a family situation, then they can be expected to con-



—*Eva Luoma.*



—*Frink from Monkmeyer*

Allow each one to choose his tasks; then give him the proper tools, and don't expect perfection—whether it's the regular ironing or setting the table for unexpected guests.

tribute to the democracy of a nation and a world. So we shall indeed be preparing our families for future democratic, Christian lives if we establish democratic, Christian patterns in our daily family routine.

Let's think a bit about this matter of daily family routine. Daddy goes to work to earn the family income. He must be responsible, also, for the upkeep of the car and the home property. Mother stays home to keep the house, feed the family, and care for the small children. The older children have school, music lessons, scouts, paper routes. Even the young children have their own routine of play and rest to prepare them for future days. Whatever the work, each one has a definite responsibility that is his alone.

Perhaps your family responsibilities are different. The father in your family may work nights, the mother may have to work days outside of the home to provide extra money for the children's schooling or for other expenses. It may be the grandmother in your home who cooks and cleans and keeps the house. The children may be in college with heavy study schedules. But again, each one will have his own responsibility in the life of the family. Each one is doing his own part. Where does the teamwork begin?

As the family increases and grows older, more money is needed. So Father must work longer hours, and will have less time for car care or keeping the lawn and home in condition. As children grow older, more demands are made on Mother's time for scout work, clothes upkeep, entertaining, and church work. The house is larger, and takes more time to clean. Food must be prepared in greater quantities; dishes are more numerous. Tommy may need help with his spelling. Burt may be ill and need help on his paper route. Susan may need help with her voice lesson. Everyone, sooner or later, needs the help of the family to carry out his own responsibility. It is then that the family team goes into action, each one giving help, each in turn receiving help.

Working As a Team . . .

For a happy home it's teamwork by the home team that counts. Here are some rules of the game, to achieve efficiency, harmony, loyalty and security democratically.

Every family will develop its own pattern for deciding the responsibilities of each member of its "team." If you have a family council, that is the ideal way to decide democratically what each will do. One family in its family council lists the specific tasks that each has (school for children, housework for Mother, earning a living for Daddy, each caring for his own room).

Then they list the work which could be carried by other members of the family, such as drying dishes, carrying out trash, washing the porch floor, cleaning the car, mowing the lawn, and taking care of the puppy. Each one speaks for the tasks for which he will be responsible that week. The family also considers unusual demands on the time of individual members, such as Mother's entertaining her church circle, Daddy's speaking before the Men's Brotherhood, or Sally's taking an exam. In such cases, they decide to excuse those persons from some added chores, or to offer extra help. The weekly list is posted in plain sight and checked as each item is finished.

This procedure was followed for several years. This is what the mother wrote to a friend about its success: "Last Tuesday, I was out doing my bit for the Community Chest. I came home later than I had expected, so as I walked up the street, I planned a quick supper, for I knew Sally wanted to go to the library. Imagine how I felt when I saw the Murphy's car in front of our house! They don't come east very often, but when they do they always stop for supper. Tom was chatting with them in the living room, showing them the pictures of our trip last summer, and seemingly unworried that it was only ten minutes until our usual supper hour. When I could excuse myself, I went into the dining room. Dick, who scorns what he calls 'woman's work,' was just adding candles to a table he had meticulously set. He had even managed a centerpiece of evergreen pieces in my two Florida shells! Sally and Shirley were flushed but triumphant in the kitchen, and a delicious dinner was almost ready. They'd raided the freezer, the cupboards, the refrigerator, but dinner was ready, and good, too! I never was so proud of our tall son and our two blond daughters! Surely the teamwork of all these years has been good for us all, and worth all the extra trouble it took to plan."

That's what we want to accomplish, isn't it? We want every member of our family to become accustomed to living democratically, so that he automatically acts democratically when situations outside of his ordinary pattern of living occur. We want each one to forget "my" rights, "my" work, "my" plans, and think in terms of "our" work, "our" plans.

You may want to plan your family routine in a different way. But however you do it, these few do's and don't's may help:

Do, if possible, allow each one to choose what he will do. It would seem that even the adults should be given an opportunity to choose occasionally. So often Mother and Father have to do what is left after everyone has

chosen the pleasant tasks. Life will not always be so kind outside the home. One week the children might choose first, the next, the adults.

Don't always assign tasks to the children which the parents dislike. Many times children are given the choice of mowing the lawn, which Daddy abhors, or mopping the kitchen floor, which Mother dislikes to do. Try to share with them pleasant tasks as well, such as polishing a lovely silver service, making a pretty salad, or waxing the new family car.

Do be sure the proper tools are available, and that the children know the correct way to proceed. When a new task is introduced, work with the child a few times, showing him how to do it, guiding his hand if need be, encouraging him to do his best. There are always "tricks to every trade"—little pointers which make for a job well done.

Don't expect children to do a task in adult perfection, but *do* expect them to do their best.

Do take advantage of the natural development and interests of the children. A three-year-old enjoys helping Mother do the dishes. Build on that interest, have a good time together, help her to continue to enjoy it. Thus, you will lay the foundation for happy homemaking years later. A teen-ager enjoys being independent and proving he is grown up. Let him carry the sole responsibility for a task difficult enough to stimulate his interest and bolster his ego. He may paint that white picket fence far better than you could!

Finally, here is one last *do*: It is only to adults that work is work and play is play, and "never the twain shall meet." To the three-year-old, dishes are work, but fun, too. To an eight-year-old, polishing a car is work, but fun, too. *Do* let's keep it that way!

Next month we will consider some work projects that you and your family can enjoy doing together.

STUDY GUIDE

I. In Preparation:

The spirit that underlies the preceding five articles becomes the center of thought and discussion in this sixth article on "Working as a Team." Respect for each individual and concern for growth through family sharing in responsibility and opportunity have their place in this article as well as in the five that precede it. It might be helpful in preparing for this meeting for the leader to review the preceding five articles, making note of examples of family teamwork. This could be used as a brief introduction to the theme of the meeting after the opening service of worship. Select in ample time a family to lead the opening worship service for the meeting.

II. The Meeting:

The program for this session might well begin with a worship service prepared and presented by a particular family. Choose a family in which one member might serve as a pianist. Thus one member of the family could play the hymns and another announce them. Still another member of the family could lead the group in prayer and a fourth could read the scripture and present a brief meditation thought.

Such an opening service could not only be a genuine experience of worship, but also introduce the theme of the evening: "Working as a Team." The leader would, of course, work with the family to insure that the worship service itself fits into the theme of this session.

After a word of appreciation to the family which has led the worship service, the chairman could review the relationship of the theme, "Working as a Team," to the five articles preceding this. Let him refer to illustrations from these articles that emphasize the importance of working as a team. The discussion that follows could then develop around the four areas of family experience suggested in the current article.

1. *Working as a team in the daily routine.* It is usually easier to do things yourself than to train others to do them—particularly when the others are young, inexperienced, and frequently inept. Yet part of the responsibility of family life—and joy, too, for that matter—lies in guiding the growing maturity and skills of the family's members. Therefore, the attitudes revealed in facing the daily routine of family life—in the division of responsibility and in the recognition of ability—are of utmost importance.

Discuss with the group the "do's" and "don't's" with which the article closes. Are there others the group would add to the list? What experiences have members of the group had in dividing routine responsibilities among members of the family? How have they succeeded in motivating the various members of the family to carry them?

2. *Working as a team in meeting personal crises.* One of the points at which a family can be drawn closely together is in helping an individual member meet some emergency. Every family has had at least one such experience. Instead of resenting its occurrence the family should make of it not only an expression of family solidarity, but also an occasion for strengthening it. Ask the group members to share some personal experience that illustrates this phase of working as a team.

3. *Working as a team in special events.* There are many special events in which a family may share, both in planning and in executing. A family

WHEN CHILDREN COME WITH YOU

Plan to have a leader who may:

Conduct a Story Hour. Children never tire of hearing Christmas stories. You will find one in this issue of HEARTHSTONE. You will find others in the primary and junior story papers and in books, such as *Told Under the Christmas Tree,* an Umbrella book.

Guide Them in Making Gifts or Decorations. Children love to make gifts for the members of their family and their friends. The leader may find suggestions for making simple but attractive gifts in such books as *Here's How and When,* by Armilda Keiser, *Do-It-Fun for Boys and Girls,* by Mary and Dale Goss, and *Holiday Craft and Fun,* by Joseph Leeming.

Lead in the Singing of Carols. Most of the carols are familiar to boys and girls, and they enjoy singing them.

Direct Games. If you have time, a seasonal game or two would be enjoyed. Suggestions for games may be found in *Games for Boys and Girls,* by E. O. Harbin and *Many Games from Many Lands,* by Nina Millen.

picnic, entertaining guests, birthday celebrations, Christmas, Thanksgiving, and Easter observances—these are but some of the special events important to every family. Every family enjoys these events. An important part of such events lies in the anticipation of them, the planning for them. It is at the planning stage that working as a team ought to be a reality. If every member of the family is to enjoy the event, then every member ought to participate in planning for it as well as have a part in the event itself. This phase of working as a team is rich in possibilities for discussion as group members recall their experiences.

4. *Working as a team in family work projects.* Next month's article and study guide are on the subject, "Work Projects Can Be Fun." Certainly, this is one area in which working as a team produces the basic family fellowship for which the project is planned. This meeting might well conclude with planning on the part of family groups represented to work out within their families short-term work projects. The results of these work projects could then be reported at the next month's session.

III. Resources:

1. Firsthand experiences of the families represented in the group.

2. *Democracy Begins at Home,* by Ernest Osborne. Public Affairs Pamphlet, number 192.

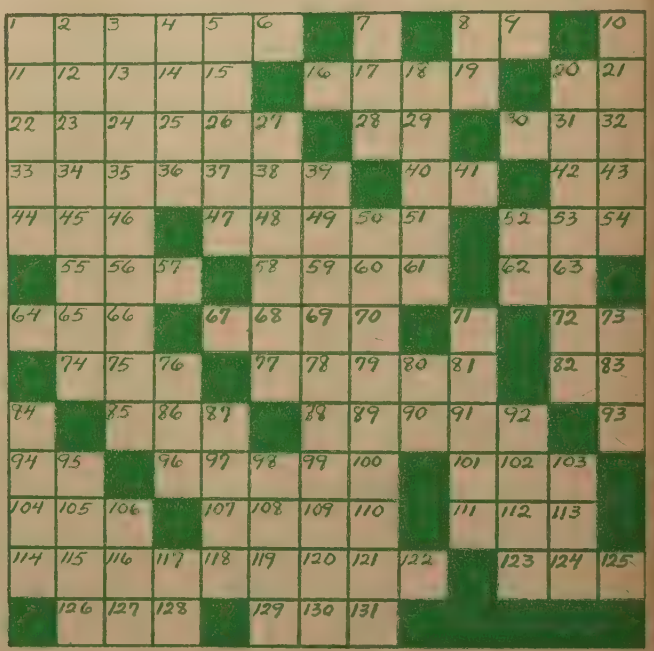
3. HEARTHSTONE: March, 1951, "Does Your Family Work Together?" by Doris Clore Demaree. July, 1951, "Planning Together in the Family Council," by Ruth E. Lentz. February, 1952, "Working for the Fun of It," by Billie Avis Hoy. May, 1952, "Family at Work!" by Frances Dunlap Heron. The preceding articles in this series, July-November, 1953.

BIBLEGRAM

By Hilda E. Allen

Guess the words defined below and write them over their numbered dashes. Then transfer each letter to the correspondingly numbered square in the pattern. The colored squares indicate word endings.

Reading from left to right, the filled pattern will contain a selected quotation from the Bible.



Solution on page 31.

A The Atlantic or the Pacific
17 10 115 101 118

B Sharpened, as a razor
112 33 121 31 103

C The part that makes the car run
43 19 116 13 23 129

D Filled more than even full
127 39 123 35 47 125

E To bear down upon, or attack
32 59 45 21 15 128

F Canal between North and South America
44 108 130 65 12 72

G Covered with beads
114 106 60 67 113 84

H Extremely selfish and greedy
3 11 122 24 71 16 62

I Time to waken from sleep
9 18 50 14 7 83 27

J A game like hockey
38 105 117 26 37 29

K Without shoes or stockings
1 92 30 49 55 41 4 61

L To flourish
104 64 42 120 48 36

M A romping girl
110 52 28 20 56 51

N A golf club
34 82 109 80 22 54

O Glossy paint
63 119 81 89 70 107

P Day before the thirteenth
111 58 87 78 96 40 86

Q To stamp upon
126 57 8 73 79 5 90

R Person who enters a contest
2 124 74 98 77 53 85

S Drove away, as chickens
66 75 68 88 95 131

T Fate
6 76 99 93 97 69 46

U Time for sleeping
102 25 91 94 100

Books for the Hearth Side

FOR CHILDREN

A Month of Christmases, by Siddie Joe Johnson (Longmans, Green & Co., 1952. 132 pages, $2.50), is a book good for family reading. Milla and John go to Fredericksburg, Texas, for a visit with Uncle Karl and Aunt Katrin. They have an exciting time and learn a great deal about Christmas customs of old Germany. This book will be especially enjoyed by boys and girls eight to twelve years of age.

★

A visit by three children and their mother to Marshall Field's store in Chicago before 1900 is the story told in **We're Going to Town,** by Dorothy Aldis (Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1952. 57 pages; $2.00). Primary children will enjoy reading about the Christmas shopping of: George, who had to buy colored tissue paper to make his father a shaving ball; Harriet, who had to buy lace; and five-year-old Willy, who had to find a big gold button to go on a flannel penwiper he planned to give his father.

★

The very inexpensive, but colorful and delightful **"Book-Elf Books"** (Rand McNally, 1952. 36 pages, 25 cents each) are good gifts for children three to six years old. Some desirable ones, printed in 1952, are **Aesop's Fables; The Old Woman and Her Pig,** retold by Wallace C. Wadsworth; **Hide-away Puppy,** by Jessica P. Broderick; **Farm Animals,** by Anna Ratzesberger; **The Goat That Went to School,** by Sally R. Frances; and **Goody: a Mother Cat Story,** by Inez Bertail.

★

The Fishing Cat, by Grayce Silverton Myers (Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1953. Unpaged, $1.25), is a very unusual story, but one which the author declares is true. It will delight young children.

★

Jennifer Is Eleven, by Eunice Young Smith (Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1952. 206 pages, $2.50), is an excellent reading book for junior girls. It contains some mystery, some excitement and good wholesome activity on a farm around 1900.

★

Dynamite, the Wild Stallion, by Nils Hogner (Aladdin Books, 1953. Unpaged, $2.00), is a thrilling story for any boy who loves horses. How Shorty managed to tame Dynamite, to ride him and have him for his own, makes a delightful and realistic story. The illustrations are beautiful. The book is suitable for boys and girls five to nine years old.

Recent additions to the series, **"Childhood of Famous Americans,"** (Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1952 and 1953. 192 pages, $1.75 each) are: **Raphael Semmes, Tidewater Boy,** by Dorothea J. Snow; **William Bradford, Pilgrim Boy,** by Bradford Smith; **Jim Bowie, Boy with a Hunting Knife,** by Gertrude Hecker Winders; **Dan Beard, Boy Scout,** by Miriam E. Mason; **Knute Rockne, Young Athlete,** by Guernsey Van Riper, Jr.; **John Sevier, Pioneer Boy,** by William O. Steele. These books are especially good for boys eight to eleven years old.

★

Junior boys interested in baseball will like the book **Safe on Second: the Story of a Little Leaguer,** by Edd Winfield Parks (Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1953. 199 pages, $2.00). Tom Winton loved baseball, but because he had been lame as a baby, his parents for a long time would not consent to his playing baseball. His experiences on his team make up the story for this book.

★

Grimsel, by Muriel Zahn (Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1953. 178 pages, $2.00) is the story of an American boy who finds adventure and makes friends on a vacation trip to Switzerland. There is excitement and mystery which will hold the interest of young readers. It is a good book for junior boys.

Bun, a Wild Rabbit, by Joseph Wharton Lippincott (J. B. Lippincott Co., 1953. 116 pages, $1.85) is one book in the **"American Wildlife Series."** This is a true and exciting story of one of the most attractive little creatures of the woods. Young readers will not only enjoy the story of Bun but will gain many authentic and interesting facts about many other creatures of the woods from the reading of this book. This book is good for boys and girls eight to eleven years old.

FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS

Young people like stories of sea adventure and mystery and will read eagerly **Island of Peril,** by Ralph Hammond (Longmans, Green, Inc., 1953. 224 pages, $2.50). Dick Cudden, the young English hero, disappointed at being left out of a fishing boat trip taken by his uncle, a resistance leader during World War II, later gets into the mystery with both feet. Herdland Island, off the coast of Norway, is the locale for Dick's mission to save his uncle. Mr. Hammond's experience as journalist, artilleryman during the war, and skilled yachtsman, qualifies him highly to write this absorbing mystery story of the sea.

★

Are you looking for a combination of eating and good fun? Then you'll find it in **The Cokesbury Dinner and Banquet Book,** by Clyde Merrill McGuire (Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1953. 149 pages; $1.95). Mrs. McGuire gives in detail twenty-three plans for dinners and banquets that will provide food, fun, and fellowship in copious measure. In addition to the usual seasonal dinner suggestions, she presents plans for such occasions as: "School Daze" Dinner, Dream Dinner, Gay Nineties Banquet, Tree Dinner, Highway Banquet, and Book Dinner.



"Perhaps you should let me explain, Madam, what the expression 'public servant' really implies."

The Geneva Ecumenical Conference

"THE CHURCH and MARRIAGE"

By J. D. Montgomery

A delegate from the United States

A significant conference on family life met at the Ecumenical Institute near Geneva, Switzerland, June 22-28, 1953, on the subject "The Church and Marriage." This was the second of a series of conferences dealing with family problems to be held at the Ecumenical Institute, the first one having met there three years ago.

The Character of the Conference

The fifty-four delegates present represented a wide range of experiences and accomplishments. They came from the following countries: Switzerland, France, Germany, Holland, Sweden, Finland, Great Britain, Norway, Mexico, Canada and the United States. In addition there were eight visitors. These delegates represented fourteen of the larger communions. Among the group were clergymen, lawyers, editors, physicians, psychiatrists, professors, missionaries, marriage counselors, and denominational directors of Christian Family Life. Three official languages were used —French, German and English.

Because this was only the second time an ecumenical group of church representatives ever came together to study family problems, the conference was exploratory in nature. Its principal aims were: a) to exchange views on the subject of the Church and marriage, and to discuss these in the light of Christian teachings and of the experience of church leaders; b) to determine where Christian groups are basically in agreement in their conception of marriage, and to learn wherein they disagree; and c) to recommend to the World Council of Churches and to the churches, measures which may help to make the Christian witness more relevant to the problems of marriage and family life.

The Messages of the Conference

At the center of the messages delivered at the conference was a series of five Bible studies presented each morning by Dr. J. J. von Allmen, of Lucerne, Switzerland. Based on the Songs of Solomon, these Bible studies were deeply stimulating and thought-provoking, and their substance was reflected in the discussion that followed, as the group searched for a Christian interpretation of marriage. Each day a major theme was presented on the following subjects: "The Role of Love Between Man and Woman in Modern Society"; "The Place and Function of the Family in the Life of Modern Society" (in two parts); "Does 'Christian Marriage' Exist, and What Is It?"; and "The Christian Teaching on Family Planning." These messages were given by speakers from Germany, the United States, Sweden, Holland and England, respectively. They became the basis for an exchange of views in general discussion, and for more detailed consideration in study groups.

The Study Groups

The conference was divided into study groups for four sessions, which studied these subjects: "The Task of Christian Marriage Counseling, Especially in Cases of Imminent Divorce"; "Sexual Education and Preparation for Marriage"; "What Should the Church Do to Influence Legislation on Marriage and Family?"; and "Socially Responsible Parenthood, and the Question of Family Planning." Reports of these groups were presented for approval at a plenary session of the conference on the final day.

The Nature of Marriage

This statement of the essential nature of marriage was given general approval by the conference:

"In its essence we regard marriage as a fully personal relationship between a man and a woman whom love has drawn together into a unity. This biunity, so achieved, is the constitutive element in marriage. 'The twain shall be one flesh,' said our Lord as he recalled men to the original divine intention for marriage. This unitive achievement is recognized by Protestants and Catholics alike, as the essence of marriage.

"Our group agrees that this biunity is constituted by the 'consensus' of the man and woman made before witnesses, and subject to the regulations which the state may make for the good of the community. The 'consensus' is a consent to marriage, that is to a union for life, voluntarily undertaken, by one man and one woman, to the exclusion of all others on either side." This unity, according to the statement, also includes all relationships which are inherent in the marriage ceremony.

The report also points to the close connection between the development of married love and the procreation of children. But it does not make true marriage or the mutual expression of love between the partners depend upon children as a necessary consequence of the union.

The Devotional Tone of the Conference

A deep devotional spirit characterized the conference throughout, as worship services and prayers were conducted in the attractive chapel daily. One morning, a communion service was celebrated, with Dr. H. H. Walz, director of the conference, officiating. One was deeply impressed as we celebrated the Communion and sang hymns together, with those present singing in their respective languages. At the Sunday morning worship service, the Reverend Alfred Jowett brought a stimulating message on the significance of family relationships in the home and the meaning of the family in our religious life. The fellowship of the conference was enriching, not only as we sat together in worship or in discussion, but also as we mingled together in individual conversations and in sharing our experiences and achievements.

The Ecumenical Institute

The Ecumenical Institute is located at the Château de Bossey, a short distance from Geneva. Here, representatives from differing religious faiths and from various nations come together to study and discuss essential elements of our Christian belief. All endeavor to find common ways of expressing their belief in one God and for giving their witness as members of one Church.

Sponsored by the World Council of Churches, the Institute was founded in 1946, and is dedicated to the cause of Ecumenical Christianity. The Director of the Institute, Professor H. Kraemer, brings to his work a dynamic personality and a rich experience. His assistant is Dr. H. H. Walz, who was Director of the Conference on the Church and Marriage. Miss S. de Dietrich, the Resident Lecturer, has also been with the Institute since its establishment.

DR. GEORGE W. CRANE



Family Counselor

Fingernail biting usually means that the parents of the child have hemmed him in with too many restrictions or have failed to let the child drain off his surplus energy in more constructive channels, or that the parents themselves are neurotic.

Janie S., aged 5, has a very high intelligence quotient. "But, Dr. Crane, she is driving me frantic by her incessant nail biting," her mother protested, irritably.

"I have tried everything I know in an effort to break her of this habit. I've punished and pleaded and coaxed but she keeps it up, just the same. I'm now at my wit's end. She cries and apologizes, and promises never to do it again, but she does. What can a mother do with such a child?"

Nervous Outlets

Biting of the fingernails is often a sign of frustration. If a child has a great deal of intelligence and nervous energy, and if he (or she) is confined to an apartment or to sedentary educational games, this energy cannot be drained off properly. Besides, if the parents are irritable and jittery, too, and thus surround the youngster with too many adult regulations or "No, No, Janie" restrictions, the child has his natural energy pent up.

In desperation, the child picks at things, just as a nervous outlet. Thus, he may pull the paper off the wall or break off pieces of the woven cane furniture, or pick at his thumbs till he has bleeding hangnails. As a variation, he may sniff his nose or twitch his features, or suck his lower lip, or bite his fingernails. All of these reactions are likely symptoms of a repressed and frustrated child.

How to Calm a Child

Our modern city society is difficult for children, anyway, for it gives them unusual mental stimulation and excites them by movies, as well as radio thrillers, but does not let them run and romp as country children do.

Moreover, a child may sit at a small table and draw pictures or use his crayons for hours but not consume as much energy as he could burn up in thirty minutes of running or swimming, riding a bicycle or engaging in other athletic sports.

And you can easily see why. For the arms don't carry much load when they act. But a child's legs carry his entire weight with every step. So action of the legs not only drains off more energy, but is far more stimulating in regard to heart action.

Athletes, such as prize fighters, run five to ten miles every day because this is one of the best conditioners for prolonged physical contests. It develops their chest and heart, and likewise burns up thousands of calories worth of fats which otherwise would go around their waistline.

How to Cure Nervousness

Many adults in this tense age are troubled by insomnia and nervousness. They cannot sleep without sedatives in liquid or tablet form. If they, too, would get outdoors and walk for miles or swim or ride a bicycle, they could slenderize their figures and sleep like a log when they went to bed.

Always encourage healthy children to *run* and *romp*. Give them roller skates and ice skates, tricycles and tennis rackets. Set up a Ping-pong table in your basement or even in your dining room.

Keep them on their feet and you'll tire them out so they aren't jittery nail-biters. They'll then fall asleep quickly when they are tucked in and thus refrain from self-sex practices.

And don't surround a child with a chronic "No, No" environment. Give him reasonable leeway.

Also, compliment his nails more often. A gift manicure set and some praise, plus a great deal of outdoor exercise, plus mamma's overcoming her own neurotic behavior, eliminated Janie's nail biting.

Chewing gum also helps by furnishing children something else to chew in lieu of fingernails. Gum chewing by youngsters is a nervous outlet for surplus psychological "steam" in tense personalities.

A Wreath of Christmas Symbols

(*From page* 13.)

Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, which was founded long ago on Christmas Eve, descendants of the early Moravians have preserved their Christmas rituals. There, in their beautiful old church, each one takes a slender taper from a tray. Then, holding the lighted candles in their hands, they sing praises of Christ, "The Light of the World."

Atop our Christmas trees may be found another important yuletide symbol, the "Star of Bethlehem." And in some places, the appearance of the first star in the heavens on Christmas Eve, is a signal for all to light their candles and sit down to their holiday feast. In European countries, in Sweden for instance, children often carry a large star as they go about visiting homes and singing carols. They are usually rewarded with small gifts.

A modern yuletide decoration is the brilliant poinsettia, a welcome embellishment for any home. This plant was introduced into our country about 1835, by Dr. Joel Poinsett, our Minister to Mexico. Now, countless numbers of these gaily colored plants are raised commercially, especially in California, to be shipped all over the country at Christmas time.

(*Continued on page* 31.)



Christmas Day

by Frances M. Powers

WOULD YOUR conscience bother you if you planned to take your family out for Christmas dinner? Would you feel you were not giving them the old-fashioned kind of Christmas that Grandmother used to have? Most mothers think that hustle and bustle in the kitchen are part and parcel of Christmas Day, but one year we did without it, and now I'm sold on the idea.

It was a year when Christmas came on Sunday. With opening gifts early in the morning, getting the children and ourselves ready and then attending church school and church, and with Grandmother and Grandfather coming in the afternoon, my husband and I decided rashly to depart from conventional procedure and to go out for Christmas dinner. We did, and it was one of the nicest Christmas days we'd ever had. Here's why.

When Christmas Day arrived, we were all more relaxed than usual. Two days before we had not been out in our favorite supermarket pushing a cart loaded down with cranberries, celery, olives, and poultry seasoning, just like every other housewife! We had those extra hours for more fun and Christmas joy as a family.

Our breakfast was leisurely and festive, not hurried and skimpy in order to make way for the preparation of a big dinner. Later, instead of dashing to the kitchen every fifteen minutes to baste the turkey, I could sit down and, without interruption, hear a story read aloud and enjoy our gifts together, or look again at the Christmas cards, play some family games, or sing some favorite carols. Then, too, our home worship service seemed to be more reverent and meaningful because the atmosphere was calm and less full of feverish activity. There was even an opportunity for all of us to put on our coats and make that neighborly call that we had always wanted to do on Christmas Day.

If you try our plan, you may not have any cold turkey for leftovers, but at bedtime you, too, may have the satisfaction of hearing your husband and children say, "This was the best Christmas Day ever!"

This Is the Way We Did It...

HEARTHSTONE would like to have its readers tell how they have handled difficult family problems. Contributions should be limited to 500 words or less. Those accepted will be paid for at regular rates. All unpublished manuscripts will be returned if they carry return postage. Here is a chance for our readers to help others!

The Angel with Only One Wing

(*From page* 20.)

torium is filling. We'll start in just a few minutes!"

"I can't find it, Nikki!" Mrs. Brown's face was red from burrowing in the bottom of the closet. "I'll put this one on; perhaps no one will notice. Now go down . . . here, I'll go with you."

THE SCRAPING of chairs could be heard on the other side of the curtain. There must be a lot of people.

"Ready, angels!" With Miss Chase was the new lady, a real dramatic coach, someone whispered.

"Nikki! Where is your other wing? You can't go on that way!" Miss Chase put out a hand to stop her.

With a toss of her head that made the stiff blond waves bob up and down, Maida swished by Nikki to the stage.

Mrs. Brown hastily explained to Miss Chase. "I can't understand it! I've looked everywhere. The poor child!"

"Well," said Miss Chase, "we can't have an angel with only one wing! It would spoil the whole tableau! It stands out like a sore thumb. Never mind, Nikki . . . here, child, don't look like that! It's too late for this performance, but we'll fix a wing for tonight, and you can go on then."

But tonight will be too late . . . tell her tonight will be too late. . . . The words stuck in Nikki's throat. She could make no sound. *Ma and Pa . . . there on the left . . . where she'd told them to sit . . . to look for her. . . .*

She was brushed aside. She stood there, mute, forgotten, lost in her tragedy.

The man stood by the curtain ready to raise it.

"Where's Louisa? For heaven's sake, isn't she here?"

There was another bustle, more rushing around. "Here's her costume! That girl must have gone to those early movies again and forgotten! A fourteen-year-old girl should be more reliable!"

"It doesn't matter." It was a new voice, the lady dramatic coach. "I thought yesterday having that tall angel by Mary overbalanced the set. We need a little one. Here! You! Little girl with one wing! Come here."

Numbly Nikki allowed herself to be pushed forward.

"Someone get her Louisa's wings," Miss Chase ordered. "They're bigger, but it won't matter."

The music started.

"Now," the lady said, "kneel here, in front, by Mary. Look up at her and the Baby. . . . Good gracious, child, what eyes you have! There! That's perfect. Ready everybody!" She stepped back.

Far, far off, miles away it seemed, Nikki could hear the creak and grumble of the old curtain as it was slowly raised. And then, suddenly . . . it was a miracle . . . that, too, faded away, and there was nothing but the beauty and glory of Mary and the Baby. Surely that was not just Clara; that was no doll. The radiance that surrounded them came from no spotlight. The glistening blue veil, the tender smile, it was Mary. The Baby breathed and stirred. . . .

In the darkened auditorium a chair creaked. Someone cleared a throat. And over at the left a big man turned uneasily to look at the woman with the tired face sitting beside him. Tears were streaming down her cheeks, but she looked up and smiled as he slid a roughened hand on hers.

A Wreath of Christmas Symbols

(*From page* 29.)

Red, green, gold, or silver bells decorate our trees and homes, and the pealing of church bells adds to the Christmas atmosphere. In England it was an old custom to toll the church bells from eleven to twelve on Christmas Eve to warn evil spirits of Christ's coming. This was called the "Old Lad's Passing." Exactly at midnight, when, according to popular belief, the Child was born, the mournful tolling stopped, and joyful peals rang out. It was the sound of bells on Christmas morning that is said to have inspired Charles Wesley to write his immortal "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing."

This year, as we decorate our homes and churches with this symbolic wreath of Christmas decorations, let us think of the various traditions connected with them. As the emblems have greater meaning for us, they will help imbue us with the true Christmas spirit.

JOSEPH

(*From page* 9.)

Now, go! Tell thy father, Heli, I would
Speak with him at eventide!"

"O Joseph!"
Mary cried, her tear-stained face aglow in
Ecstasy, "There is a song in my heart—
A song—I go to my father, singing!"

And Joseph stood and watched her lightly
Walking up the path, her arms outstretched, and
With uplifted face, as though she saw a
Glory in the heavens, while backward, borne
Upon the breeze, came lusty measures of
Her song:
"My soul doth magnify the Lord
And my spirit hath rejoiced in God
My Savior.
For he hath regarded the low estate
Of his handmaiden; for, behold, from henceforth
All generations shall call me blessed . . ."

Starette

(*From page* 14.)

she was right next to the front door where someone was sure to see her.

Starette sat and sat and sat. She did not see one single person. The bough of the tree rocked her back and forth, back and forth, as it swayed with the wind. It was like her cradle in Grey Cloud, and she grew very sleepy. She had to stick herself with her points to stay awake.

When she was sure she could not stay awake another minute, the front door of the house opened and two children came out. They were dressed in brightly colored snow suits and seemed very much excited about Christmas.

"Just think," said the little boy, "it's Christmas Eve! Look at all the snow! Aren't we lucky to have snow for Christmas?"

"Isn't the snow pretty?" the little girl clapped her red-mittened hands together. She looked right at Starette.

Starette glistened with Christmas joy. She knew Mother Snowflake would be very proud of her when she told how happy she had made the two children in the white house.

As the children played around the evergreen tree, Starette grew sleepy again. She gave a big yawn. It was natural, she decided, that she should be tired after her big trip from Grey Cloud and her rolling on the roof.

Pretty soon Starette trickled off to sleep, dreaming happily of all the people on earth who had a merry Christmas because they loved snowflakes.

Give HEARTHSTONE for Christmas

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The American Baptist Publication Society
1703 Chestnut, Philadelphia 3, Pa.

BIBLEGRAM SOLUTION

Biblegram page 26.

"Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense, to repay every one for what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."—Revelation 22:12-13.

The Words

A Ocean	K Barefoot
B Honed	L Thrive
C Engine	M Tomboy
D Heaped	N Mashie
E Charge	O Enamel
F Panama	P Twelfth
G Beaded	Q Trample
H Hoggish	R Entrant
I Morning	S Shooed
J Shinny	T Destiny

U Night



Over the Back Fence

President Vetoes Alcohol Sponsors

Last month HEARTHSTONE called your attention to the work of the Advertising Council in promoting church attendance.

This month an advertisement from the same Council promoting interest in the Ground Observer Corps in the Civil Defense program has come to our desk. It contains a message from the President concerning the importance of the GOC, under his picture and over his signature.

These advertisements are placed in local newspapers by local business and industrial concerns as sponsors.

There is one group, however, that President Eisenhower refuses to allow as sponsors for the ad bearing his name and picture.

A footnote to editors under the ad says: "The President's approval of the use of his picture and statement in this advertisement carries the stipulation that it is not to be sponsored by a manufacturer or distributor of alcoholic beverages."

HEARTHSTONE highly commends the President for forestalling any attempt to associate the dignity of his office with the alcoholic beverage industry.

The liquor business may be legal but it is evidently not yet respectable enough to be associated in the same advertisement breath with the President of the United States.

Good for you, Mr. President, and more power to you!

Christmas Church Going —Guest Editorial

Christmas church going fills pews that are usually empty. . . . This . . . is cheating. It is using the church as a convenience. Those who believe should believe every week of the year and not only when sentiment stirs them. . . . To look in now and again is like using the church to get christened, married, and buried (with more beauty of language and of rite than a secular treatment of the occasion provides) and then never going near the place again. Such exploitation . . . seems to me discreditable. Those who will not take the discipline should not snatch at the privilege. If the faith is not worth their attention on the dull Sundays—not to mention the weekdays—what right have perfunctory worshipers to share in the attractions on the festival days? . . .

During a recent Christmas I received from my . . . church an invitation which struck me as really lamentable in its tone:

> Christmas Day is the Birthday of our Lord Jesus Christ—Will you let Him share it with you at one or more of our services?

Will I *let* Him? Should I not be told, firmly and even fiercely, that if I believe in the facts of the Christmas story, then it is a supreme privilege to be allowed to share in this grandeur of a spiritual opportunity, and that I am committing unpardonable folly if I miss the chance of sharing such a communion?

If I am an unbeliever, then I frankly reject the invitation of religion and risk the consequences. That is honest enough. But if I am in any way a believer that Christ the Lord has lived and died for man and made man's salvation possible by His suffering, then I should be awestruck at the splendor of this mystery. I should be advised solemnly of my privilege, and strongly commanded to attend the services as part of my duty and discipline. To put such wheedling leaflets under my door a few days before Christmas is certainly not to command the respect of any intelligent person.

Will I *let* Him? This is the last word in Christian defeatism.[1]

—By Ivor Brown, London drama critic.

[1]From *The Saturday Review*, December 20, 1952. Copyrighted and used by permission. We do not often relinquish this space but are glad to do so for this comment which seems to us to be a "word fitly spoken."

Family Gifts for Christmas

The Magazine for the Christian Home

Hearthstone

You know the value of this monthly homemaking magazine, which is dedicated to developing "a strong, positive Christian family life." It is the meeting place of parent, religious teacher, educator, friend. It brings the whole world into your home through powerful feature articles on family problems, clean fiction for every age group, family worship ideas, housekeeping suggestions, child guidance, book and music reviews, and much, much more. *Order an inexpensive gift subscription for each of your Protestant friends for the coming twelve months.* This gift appeals to the real home —the house with a soul.

Introductory Yearly Subscription—$2.50
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THE SECRET PLACE

Our churches' own book of daily devotions for individual and family use. This inspiring companion to Bible reading is a three months' collection of daily themes, Scripture texts and references, human-interest testimonies and brief prayers. Other thought-provoking messages, poems and illustrations complete its 96 pages. A yearly subscription will help strengthen your family altar. And, remember your Christmas contribution to THE SECRET PLACE SERVICEMEN'S FUND, 1703 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia 3, Pennsylvania, will send free copies of this pocket-sized quarterly to the armed forces.

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PRACTICAL GIFTS for CHRISTMAS

Church Women in the Scheme of Things



BY MOSSIE ALLMAN WYKER. A new enlightening discussion on how women can learn techniques for achieving without being militant . . . why the church is losing many women capable of serving at policy-making levels . . . the church woman and ordination in the various faiths . . . the world areas in which United Church Women are serving . . . etc. *$2.00*

Growing in God's Way: My First Book

A new treasured keepsake for parents to record a child's spiritual growth. Beautifully illustrated in color. Space for birth certificate, photos, family tree, church dedication, birthdays and other highlights. Bible verses, prayers and songs keyed to spiritual values. *Blue, pink or yellow padded cover, $2.50; blue, pink or white leatherette cover, $1.75; full-color paper cover, 75 cents*

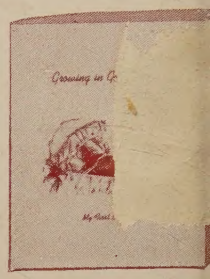
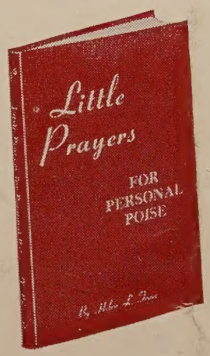


Table Talk and Tidbits

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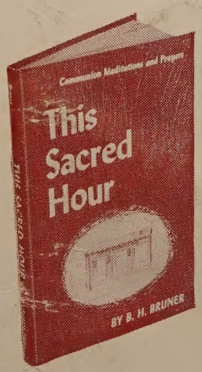


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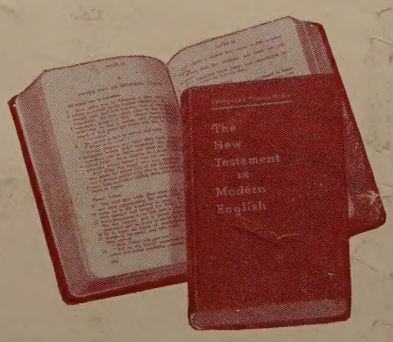
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